

*MUSICAL •
MEMORIES
BY • • • •
DR. SPARK •*



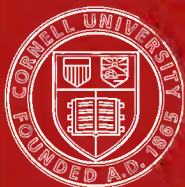
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MUSICAL MEMORIES.



DR. WILLIAM SPARK.

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MUSICAL MEMORIES

BY

WILLIAM SPARK, MUS. DOC.

Late Organist of the Town Hall, Leeds.

New Edition, Revised and Corrected Throughout.
With Sixteen Portraits Added.

LONDON :

W. REEVES, 83, CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION.

REMINISCENCES of a musician on musicians are always interesting and instructive. In these "Memories" will be found many swiftly drawn character sketches, from which a better idea of the noted men of the time and the circumstances surrounding them may be gathered than from later cut and dried biographical volumes or encyclopædias.

Again, an anecdote be it humorous or pathetic, has the power to lift up the veil from the artist and show us the man. Dr. Spark was familiar with many of the musical celebrities of his time and his book will be found full of good things. The con-

tinued demand for copies of these "Memories" has made a third impression necessary.

This popular illustrated edition has been revised throughout, care being taken to remedy the clerical errors which unfortunately remained in the second edition. A revised copy of the late Dr. Spark's Memories was among his effects.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE following remarks printed in my first announcement of this work are probably sufficient to explain why I have ventured to publish my reminiscences in a separate form :

The greater number of these "Musical Memories" were written for and published in the magazines and journals of the day. In accordance with the wish expressed by many distinguished musicians and a large circle of private friends, I submit these "Memories" to the general public. To give the book additional interest I have added much other matter concerning music and musicians.

WM. SPARK.

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SIR MICHAEL COSTA.

MUSICAL MEMORIES,

PAST AND PRESENT.

I.

SIR MICHAEL COSTA.

MY first acquaintance with the subject of this sketch, then Mr. Costa, was when the foundation-stone of St. George's Hall, Bradford, was laid, with full masonic honours, in 1852.

I met him a second time at the Festival which was given in 1853 to inaugurate the opening of that Hall. He was at that time at the height of his fame as a conductor, and was not only conductor of the Philharmonic Society, confessedly the best musical organization in Great Britain, but he was also conductor of the Sacred Harmonic Society, a body which he had revolutionised by his

combined powers of organization and discipline. He also wielded the *bâton* at the great Birmingham Festivals, and indeed wherever the services of a great conductor were required Michael Costa was always to the fore. Undoubtedly he was the most popular *chef d'orchestre* that ever resided in England. I must confess that as a young man I felt somewhat frightened at the austere manner and sharp conversation of this famous *maestro*. For instance, I remember asking him after dinner whether he considered two conductors desirable for a musical society which was then about to be established in Leeds, whose duties should be exercised at alternate practices and performances. "Consent to nothing of the sort," he said, very rapidly. "You must not do so, that is not business. If you are conductor and wish to be somebody, stick to your own power and divide with nobody. You must assert your own independence, and your men must be entirely under your own control, if you wish to succeed." No doubt it was this principle of cool and determined action in all he did that helped to secure for him the very high position which he occupied. At the same time, it must not be denied that very frequently his exhibitions of sharp temper, quick speech, and over-ruling manner, led him to be regarded with

fear and jealousy by many who did not understand his real character.

During the progress of the rehearsals for the Bradford Festival, and subsequently at the performances, Michael Costa was the guest of Samuel Smith, of Field House, then mayor of Bradford, a distinguished and enthusiastic supporter of music. It was the first time Costa had heard the West Riding voices, now so celebrated all over the world. He was at once struck, not only with their enormous power, but with the rich tone of their voices, and their remarkable aptitude for reading music at first sight. The trebles and altos were not only sweet but penetrating, the tenors were moderately good, but the basses, said Costa, were the most magnificent he had ever listened to in his life; they came down upon you at times "like a troop of organ pedal pipes." He was much chagrined when told that, for local reasons and prejudices, he would be compelled to admit into his band of splendid instrumentalists, whom he had recommended to be engaged from the London orchestras, some inferior performers belonging to the musical societies of Bradford and the neighbourhood.

The mistakes made by these gentlemen in the performance of some difficult orchestral music some-

times led to ludicrous scenes. At one of the rehearsals a local gentleman was evidently playing far away from his copy, and Costa, with his quick rat-a-tap-tap on the conductor's desk, stopped his progress. Addressing the delinquent, he said, as rapidly as he could utter the words: "I beg your pardon, sir, your copy must be wrong. You are playing the wrong notes. Have you the right place?" The poor offender said, "Yes, sir; this is the piece. In four flats, is it not?" "Yes, sir, yes, sir; in A flat major," quickly replied the conductor. "Well," said the offender, "yer see, Mister Costa, awm bound ter tell yer that in ma part o't country, where I coom from, you know, these fower flats, some plays 'em and some doesn't—I doesn't!" Of course there were roars of laughter at this most extraordinary bit of Yorkshirism, and the gentleman was quietly requested to retire. Another of the local performers was playing some wrong notes, when the performance was again stopped by the same sharp, decisive rap of the *bâton*. The same observation as before was made to the offender by Mr. Costa: "I beg your pardon, sir, your copy must be wrong." "Well," said the gentleman addressed, "Mr. Costa, it's all right; but I played a 'hef,' and it should be a 'hee.'"

But these gentlemen were not the usual members of the orchestra in Bradford. They came from

some villages in the neighbourhood, and, as I understood afterwards, were not competent to take part with the talented artists in the orchestra under Sir Michael Costa.

At the close of the first morning performance at Bradford, where Madame Clara Novello sang with superb effect, Costa was waited for by the outside crowd as the hero of the festival; and when the people made way for his entry into the mayor's carriage, one rough enthusiast observed to his mate, pointing to the great conductor, "Sitha, Bill; that's t' beggar, 'at waaves t' stick!" Some years afterwards, when dining with Sir Michael at his house in Eccleston Square, London, he said to me, "My dear Spark, you remember that Yorkshire story about 't' beggar that waaves t' stick,' which I have often told to my friends; and, as you know something of Italian, I want to learn, before I visit Naples again, what word you think best to represent 'beggar'"; and he was greatly amused when I suggested "beggarini," which he afterwards adopted in telling the tale in Italian.

Costa was sixty-four years of age when he was asked, in 1874, at the suggestion of the late Henry Smart and myself, to conduct the Leeds Musical Festival. At that time he was in the best possible health, full of life, vigour, power, and discipline.

His rehearsals of the chorus in the Philosophical Hall will not be easily forgotten. Possessing a sharp, sensitive ear, a quick eye, and keen observation, nothing escaped him; and he was always honest and honourable in awarding praise and detecting faults.

One source of his great success as a conductor was his personal attention to detail; nothing seemed too small for his observation, inspection, and strict surveillance; all were resorted to as necessity arose, and always with marked advantage. Mr. Peck, the faithful old librarian of the Sacred Harmonic Society, was indispensable at the Birmingham and Leeds Musical Festivals; and the manner in which Sir Michael alternately roistered and encouraged this willing slave was most amusing. On the Sunday afternoon preceding the first rehearsal of the 1874 "music meeting" in Leeds, I went with Sir Michael, Mr. John Barber, Mr. Hepworth Hill, and the obsequious Peck, to the Town Hall, to see about the arrangements of the orchestra desks, and to settle about the organ accompaniments, what amount of power should be used, having regard to the splendid full band which was to display its magnificence on that memorable occasion. "Mr. Peck, Mr. Peck," shouted Sir Michael. "Yes, Sir Michael; here I

am." "Well, where did you put those copies of the extra band parts to *Samson*, eh, eh?" "Well, Sir Michael, I thought you would——" "Mr. Peck, you have no business to *think* that you should do anything I had not instructed you to do. Now, Mr. Peck, hold your tongue, two people cannot talk at once; but I'll toss you up which of us shall begin!" Poor Peck was of course dumb, until he was requested once more to open his mouth and give a simple answer to a sharp question.

And here I may mention that while Costa agreed with me as to the invaluable aid and unique effect of the deep pedal notes of such an organ as that in the Town Hall, he did not, as some conductors do, object to the loud manual stops and reeds for certain passages and effects; indeed, he had written out with his own hand (the composers not having made any) special organ parts for the *Messiah*, *Samson*, *Solomon*, the *Mount of Olives*, the *Requiem*, etc., in which, while the unison eight-feet stops were mostly marked for use, there were frequent bursts for the full organ, especially at the closing symphonic phrases with which many of Handel's sublime choruses are finished.

I have heard all this power described by veritable *dilettanti* as being "vulgar, erroneous, misjudged," etc. On the other hand, Meyerbeer,

Henry Smart, Chorley, J. W. Davison, and other musicians, possessing great experience and keen intellects, declared the special effects Costa arranged with the combined power of orchestra, organ, and chorus, particularly at the great Handel festivals in the Crystal Palace, to be among the most splendid results music was capable of producing. In 1877 Costa conducted his last Leeds Musical Festival—the magnificence of the performances exceeding anything ever before heard in Yorkshire, or indeed anywhere else. No one who was privileged to listen on that occasion can ever forget the production of Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*; that is indeed a "musical memory" to me, which I trust will never leave me.

Truly it was a sad misfortune for many of us that the Festival committee could not agree with Costa for the following meeting; he had formed his opinion, and declined, as was his wont, to give way, and the committee were equally obstinate. Alas that it should have been so! However, at my invitation, he came twice to Leeds after the Festival of 1877: once to be present at my installation as Worshipful Master of the "Fidelity" Freemasons' Lodge (Sir Michael was an enthusiastic freemason, and held a high position in the craft); and again to conduct a performance in the Town Hall of his

beautiful oratorio *Eli*, given by the Leeds Madrigal and Motet Society, of which I was for many years the conductor. He was greatly chagrined to find that, chiefly through local pique and jealousy, the Hall was not filled, and that the concert resulted in a pecuniary loss to myself of a considerable sum. He firmly declined to take any fee, or even his expenses, and generously said, "My dear Spark, to listen to that magnificent chorus—such grand voices, so admirably trained, and so enthusiastic as all the singers are—that is quite a sufficient reward for me."

No one, excepting perhaps his own devoted brother Raphael, ever knew to what an extent Sir Michael Costa bestowed his charity and generosity. Scores of impecunious, unfortunate members of his band owed him their very existence, from his timely aid in sending them away to Hastings, St. Leonard's-on-Sea, Eastbourne, or some other health-restoring, beautiful coast residence, entirely at his own expense.

On the occasion of his coming to Leeds for my masonic installation, he received and gracefully acknowledged a splendid address, written by the highly esteemed Provincial Grand Master, Bro. T. W. Tew, the successful banker of Pontefract. Towards the close of the banquet which followed

the installation, one of the members (Bro. Denison), volunteered to sing the old Paul Bedford song, "Jolly Nose!" This he did in such an original style, giving out the upper C from his chest with the most remarkable vigour, that poor Sir Michael roared with laughter; and ever afterwards when I met him in town he always asked after his friend and brother "Jolly Nose!"

Sir Michael Costa was never married. He was once engaged, I believe, to the mother of Mdme Parepa Rosa; but the wooing was not successful, the engagement was broken off, and he declared he would "never again be troubled with a woman." Not that he was insensible to the charms of the fair sex, far from it; I never knew a really great man who was. After one of the Musical Festival performances, when he was the guest of my old friend Mr. J. W. Atkinson, one of the hon. secretaries, he said to a lady, on his return home to Hanover Square: "Madame, the ladies of the chorus here are very exuberant! One of them, a pretty Yorkshire young woman, came up to me as I was entering my room, and said, 'O Sir Michael, you conduct like an angel; I should so much like to kiss you.'" "Well, Sir Michael," eagerly said the lady, "and did you kiss her?"

"Madam, mad'am," he quickly said, "if you please, that is my business!"

No more truly loyal subject existed than Sir Michael Costa. From the time that he gave piano-forte lessons to the Princess Royal, the future Empress of Germany, he was always imbued with a spirit of loyalty to her most gracious Majesty the Queen; and to all the members of the royal family. For many years he annually visited the Princess in Berlin, and used to tell me on his return of the happy moments he spent with her in playing over some of the old duets, especially his favourite Rössinian overtures, *William Tell*, *La Gazza Ladra*, *Il Barbiere*, etc.

He was never a great pianist, but was an admirable accompanist and a sweet singer. He spoke English well and wrote it in a remarkably neat style reminding me of Mozart's; and those who have seen the latter's (as I have at Carl Reinecke's in Leipsic) will know what praise is here. The plate and presents he possessed were really extraordinary, chiefly from royalty; and he was decorated with orders from the Sovereigns of Germany, Turkey, the Netherlands, Würtemberg, Italy, etc.

At his beautiful house in Eccleston Square, I have had the honour and the enjoyment of many a good dinner with this truly great man.

He was always animated and cheerful, full of racy anecdote, and a willing listener to others; surely the friendship of such a man was worth having and gratefully remembering.

Sir Michael Costa died early in May, 1884, at the age of seventy-four, and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, in the presence of an immense concourse of musicians, the nobility, friends, and the general public. I felt it to be my duty to go to town on purpose to attend his funeral. At the close of the usual beautiful Church of England service for the dead, wreaths and other floral tributes were cast upon the coffin by affectionate hands; and then the mourners followed the body to its last resting-place in a vault next to that where repose the ashes of Sir Michael's father, upon the foot of whose coffin is engraven in brass the inscription, "Pascal Costa, 1845." Those who witnessed the sad ceremony of his funeral must have come away with the conviction, as I did, that Sir Michael Costa was held in high and general esteem; for not only were tears shed by women over the coffin, but the eyes of many men were moistened with grief.

II.

SIR JULIUS BENEDICT.

SIR JULIUS cannot be claimed as one of our native composers—I wish he could. He was a German, having been born at Stuttgart in 1804. But, as he came to England when a very young man—he left Weber and Dresden in 1824 to start on his career in Vienna, shortly after which he established his fame and made his home in this country, which he never afterwards left—and moreover as he composed nearly all his great works for English audiences, and exercised considerable personal influence on the progress of music here, I think we may venture to consider him, like Sir Michael Costa, a naturalized loyal Englishman.

It is interesting to remember that Benedict was the connecting link between the last generation of eminent musicians and the present. He had seen, talked to, and dined with Beethoven; he was the favourite pupil of Carl Maria von Weber, the immortal composer of *Der Freyschütz*, *Oberon*, etc.;

he was intimate with Hummel, Mendelssohn, Gade, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Thalberg, Liszt, Hiller, Verdi, Bellini, Donizetti, Chopin, David, Auber, Schumann, Berlioz, Brahms, Raff; and indeed there was no musical celebrity between 1824 and 1884 whom Benedict did not know. How very interesting therefore his memoirs would have been had they been finished at the time of his death! What delightful anecdotes his friends have heard him tell of Mendelssohn, for instance! He always described his first meeting with the composer of *Elijah* with peculiar pleasure and interest.

"It was," he would say, "in the beginning of May, 1821, when walking in the streets of Berlin with my master and friend, Carl Maria von Weber, that he directed my attention to a boy, apparently about eleven or twelve years old, who, on perceiving the author of *Freyschütz*, ran towards him, giving him a most friendly and hearty greeting. 'It is Felix Mendelssohn,' said Weber; introduced me at once to the prodigy child, of whose marvellous talent and execution I had already heard so much at Dresden. I shall never forget the impression of that day on beholding the beautiful youth, with his auburn hair clustering in ringlets round his shoulders, the look of his brilliant, clear eyes, and the smile of innocence and candour on his lips.

He would have it that we should go with him at once to his father's house; but, as Weber had to go elsewhere, he took me by the hand and made me run a race till we reached his home. Up he went briskly to the drawing-room, where, finding his mother, he exclaimed: 'Here is a pupil of Weber, who knows a great deal of his music in the new opera. Pray, mamma, do ask him to play it for us.' And so, with an irresistible impetuosity, he pushed me to the pianoforte, and made me remain there until I had exhausted all the store of my recollections. When I then begged of him to let me hear some of his own compositions, he refused, but played from *memory* such of Bach's fugues or Cramer's studies as I could name. At last we parted, not without a promise to meet again. On my very next visit I found him seated on a footstool, before a small table, writing with great earnestness some music. On my asking him what he was about, he replied gravely, 'I am finishing my new quartet for pianoforte and stringed instruments.' I could not resist," Benedict would add, "my own boyish curiosity to examine this composition, and, looking over his shoulder, saw as beautiful a score as if it had been written by the most skilful copyist. It was his first quartet in C minor, published afterwards as Opus I."

When Sir Julius had finished this most interesting story of his first acquaintance with Mendelssohn, I ventured to say that, like Mozart, Costa, and others, Sir Julius himself wrote both music and English almost like copperplate work, clear and distinct, with every character admirably formed.

Whilst in almost every class and form—symphonies, overtures, marches, oratorios, pianoforte pieces, and sonatas—he wrote abundantly, it will chiefly be by his beautiful operas that Benedict will be remembered hereafter as an eminent composer. His first English opera was entitled *The Gipsy's Warning*, containing some remarkably fine numbers, especially the grand bass song, "Rage, thou angry storm," which I well remember used to be sung with thrilling effect by that great artist and intimate friend of Benedict, Herr Staudigl. Then followed the *Brides of Venice*, in which occurs the charming ballad, "By the sad sea waves"; the *Crusaders*; and then, in 1862, his remarkable work, the *Lily of Killarney*, which was brought out soon after the success of Mr. Dion Boucicault's *Colleen Bawn*. Respecting this latter work, I remember being told by the talented *cantatrice*, Madame Rudersdorff, and Signor Randegger (the latter, by the way, being Benedict's executor), that this would be indeed the composer's *chef d'œuvre*; that

they had been constantly to Benedict's well-known residence in Manchester Square, and had played and sung over with him a great portion of the opera; and that it was brimful of lovely music, and must prove a great success. There can be no question that the opinions of those two admirable musicians were correct, for the work is indeed a hive-house of delicious melody, refined harmony, spirited and effective instrumental colouring in the score, such as only the greatest masters have ever excelled.

But it was chiefly in connexion with the performance of his fine cantatas—such as *Undine*, produced at the Norwich Festival in 1860, and in which Madame Clara Novello made her last appearance in England—that I was especially associated with Sir Julius Benedict.

As conductor of one of the best musical societies Yorkshire ever had—the Leeds Madrigal and Motet Society—I was constantly looking out for new works, and seeking to enlist the personal interest and supervision of the respective composers in their production.

It was with this view that I induced Sir Julius to visit Leeds in 1867, and personally to direct a performance, by an orchestra of about 300, of his beautiful cantata, or rather oratorio, the *Legend of St. Cecilia*. As I had known Sir Julius for many

years, he gave me the great pleasure and honour of being my guest on that occasion; and I had then the opportunity of hearing his splendid powers of improvisation and execution on the pianoforte, and of listening to his most interesting and edifying remarks on music and musicians, especially about some of the more famous of the celebrities I have already named.

It is very much to be regretted that works of the calibre of *Undine* and *St. Cecilia* are not more frequently introduced by our musical societies, being infinitely superior to many of the more modern productions, which, for the most part, are made "to order," and have neither life nor breadth, neither power, animation, nor inspiration. But these creations of Benedict possess qualities of this kind in an eminent degree, and I am persuaded that, if my suggestions were utilized, much beautiful music would be made known which now lies as a dead letter to thousands of music-loving people, vocalists as well as instrumentalists.

Mr. Joseph Bennett contributed a very interesting letter to the *Lute*, of which he was then the editor, where he shows, by some facts known only to himself, that the late Sir Julius Benedict's intellectual activity was something extraordinary, and that his brain, even within the last

decade, was busy with large projects such as might have been entertained by a vigorous and aspiring youth. It appears that Sir Julius had determined, after the reception, at the Birmingham Festival of 1870, of his oratorio *St. Peter* (which I heard, and "wired" an account thereof during the performance for an evening paper), to compose a similar work, the libretto to be compiled by Benedict himself, and that it should deal with the early career of King David, and receive the title of *The Shepherd Prince*. Benedict also contemplated composing music to another oratorio called *The Temple*, and Mr. Bennett winds up his story by saying, "I need scarcely add that this *Temple* was never built. The dream of it faded, like that of the *Shepherd Prince*, and there was an end of it. Benedict, may be, found no time to entertain the thought, which consequently lost its hold upon his mind; and I, for reasons not necessary to enter upon, never attempted to press it."

And thus the life of this great, industrious musical genius comes to an end at the ripe old age of eighty-one. But what a splendid example he has shown to the younger members of the craft by his indefatigable, ceaseless work! Let them all learn a lesson from him, not only on this score, but on the merits of the many other virtues and excellences of

his character. Respecting the latter, I may observe that Sir Julius was one of the most courteous, kind, and polished gentlemen in all the relations of life it has ever been my good fortune to meet. For fifty successive years he gave an annual benefit concert, an extra one being given by his friends and admirers in the Albert Hall, which was called "The Sir Julius Benedict Jubilee Concert." He laughed heartily when one of his friends afterwards told him he had been dubbed "Sir Jubilee Benefit." Apart from concert giving and composing, he led a life of never-ceasing activity, and occasionally ventured into the field of literature. His "Life of Weber" met with an enthusiastic reception from the critics, and many of his other literary productions secured for him unstinted praise and admiration. And yet in addition to all this he gave pianoforte lessons incessantly, and never allowed any occupation whatever to interfere with that lucrative vocation.

It is indeed unfortunate that the record of such a life as his has not been entirely written and brought home to us. In the autumn of 1884, Mr. Willert Beale (Walter Maynard) began the story of his life, and his kindly biographer met Sir Julius constantly in Manchester Square, to write most interesting things from his dictation. The meetings were interrupted by provincial and other engagements, and

at last were stopped altogether by the fatal illness which the composer and *performer* (he played piano-forte solos up to the last) contracted on a winter's journey from Huddersfield to London. And yet some 150 pages were written, containing many interesting details up to the year 1824, when Benedict left Weber at Dresden. The MS. is, I believe, in the hands of Lady Benedict, but whether she will transfer this precious material to some one who will give it to the public, with the remainder of Benedict's life, remains to be seen. I hope she will. Lady Benedict was a Miss Forty, his pupil. She is a charming woman, possessing rare gifts and accomplishments. Not only is she a first-rate pianist, and a composer of some excellent songs, but she possesses a remarkable facility in writing verse, and is moreover an extremely clever mathematician and a classical scholar. The offspring of Benedict's second marriage is a bright, charming boy (the Prince of Wales's godson, who, Sir Julius remarked to a friend, "has a most decided genius for sweetmeats, and, on being asked that morning which he would have, a box of chocolate or some sugar plums, replied without a moment's hesitation, 'Both!'"

During the height of his prosperity he frequently gave musical and social evenings of a most enjoyable character, the leading art critics of the metro-

polis being invariably among his guests. At one of his classical musical gatherings at home, which was attended by representatives of the nobility, and by many representatives of the artistic and fashionable world, after the performance of Mendelssohn's trio in D minor for piano, violin, and 'cello, "one of the male portion of my family," so Benedict told me, "suddenly went to the pianoforte, and said he had been asked by some ladies to sing a song, which he would do with pleasure. Will you believe it, my dear doctor, that young man proceeded to spoil all the beautiful classical music which I had provided for my guests by singing 'Tommy, make room for your Uncle!' and he had the further impudence to request us to join in the chorus! The ladies and gentlemen roared with laughter, for in his way the lad didn't do it badly; but I could never forgive him the perpetration of such an act of dreadful vandalism."

One of the most remarkable things in this great musician's life was his playing pianoforte solos in public when he was just on eighty years of age. A mutual intimate friend informs me that he heard him play in the Dome Concert Room at Brighton not a year before his death, and that he performed his self-allotted task with amazing fire and brilliancy, and afterwards accompanied several songs

and concerted pieces from his opera, the *Lily of Killarney*. My friend said to him, "I was amazed and delighted with your pianoforte playing; you never played better; it really was a most remarkable performance." "Well," he replied, "to tell the truth, I don't think it was at all bad for a young man who is within a few months of eighty years of age."

His first composition was a pianoforte sonata, dedicated to his master Weber, and published by Peters, of Leipsic, in 1822. He received twelve complimentary copies, and so delighted was he to see his name in print, that he played the piece all through from each of the twelve copies! His final work was to set music to some verses—written at his request in February, 1885—by his friend Walter Maynard.

The last time I saw Sir Julius was in Kensal Green Cemetery, at the funeral of Sir Michael Costa early in May, 1884. He then looked very ill; in truth, it was observed by many of his professional brethren that they feared he had "one foot in the grave." And, alas! their fears turned out to be only too true, for Sir Julius Benedict, just twelve months afterwards—June 5th, 1885—followed his brother Costa to that bourn from which no traveller returns.

III.

MENDELSSOHN.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY possessed, like Mozart, a wonderful musical organization; and yet their surroundings were totally different. Mozart knew the pinch of poverty—Mendelssohn never. One was the son of a poor, struggling German musician; the other was born “with a silver spoon in his mouth.” Both loved their art; and both lived, breathed, and moved in an atmosphere of music. Doubtless Mozart and Mendelssohn were both equally happy in their thoughts and dreams of music. I know, from my own experience, how delicious and lovely these dreams of music are. Often have I lain in my bed, when a boy, after reading Holmes’s delightful “Life of Mozart,” gazing on the dear old Exeter Cathedral, close to which I was born and reared, thinking and musing on what sweet musical thoughts Mozart must have had, even in his infancy. On his seventh birthday, when the winter lay heavy and cold upon

Salzburg, it was all spring-time with the "wonder-child." No matter what snow and ice might lock up the earth as in a marble tomb, it was all sunshine and song in that boy's soul. Music was the passion of his life. Wherever harmonious sounds were, there was happiness; nothing but discords and jangling noises could cast a shadow over his always cheery face and pleasant manner.

And so it was with Mendelssohn. He loved music, and more than anything else on the earth he associated spring with his happy thoughts of St. Cecilia's art. The songs of larks and of nightingales, the hue and odour of early blossoms, and the million-fold new life spring was putting forth on every side, all awakened jubilant songs and streaming melodies of joy in the breast of the boy Mendelssohn. His quickening life put forth buds like the flower stems; a mighty impulse toward creative effort awoke in his soul; and the whole world seemed to him too narrow and confined. His world was the realm of music; and its boundaries must, before all other things, be widened and enlarged.

Before I was twenty years of age, I had read and heard so much of Mendelssohn, and had revelled so happily in his *Songs without Words*, that I longed to see him. At last my wish was

gratified. The tongue of good report had spread the fame of his coming oratorio, *Elijah*; and I resolved at any cost to go to the Birmingham Musical Festival, and see and hear Mendelssohn. Can I ever forget the composer, or his music? The memory of that day, in August, 1846, is enshrined in my heart like the adoration of the Creator by a holy man. Never can I forget the first performance of *Elijah*—never erase from the tablet of my memory what was indelibly written thereon! It was undoubtedly one of the greatest intellectual feasts I have ever experienced. Mendelssohn conducted his own work with the greatest possible care and accuracy; but I was somewhat disappointed with his *personnel*, not artistically, but physically. I knew nothing beforehand of his *physique*, and, boy-like, had formed the idea that he should, in accordance with his fame, stand at least six feet high!

When I spoke to him in the ante-room after the *Elijah* performance, his eyes gleamed like fire; his face was radiant; and he looked like one inspired. And was he not? Who could have written such Divine melodies as "O rest in the Lord," "But the Lord is mindful of His own," "Lord God of Abraham," and "O God, have

mercy," but one who was specially gifted and blessed from on high?

Personally, he was of middle height, and of slender frame, but possessed of strong muscular power; for Mendelssohn was a good gymnast, swimmer, rider, walker, and dancer; and yet his outward and inner nature was one of extraordinary sensitiveness. A mutual friend told me that excitement stimulated him to the verge of frenzy, from which he was restored only by sound, death-like sleep. His brain had from childhood been taxed excessively by the University course, study of modern languages, drawing, etc.; and to these was added the study of music in its profoundest sense.

His mother instilled into him the habit of constant occupation; and his dear, good, appreciative sister (a splendid pianist) was never satisfied unless she was treated to some new composition from his ever-active pen, almost daily.

The rapidity with which he mastered a score; his perfect understanding of the requirements of new compositions, the constructions and complications of which were at once transparent to him; his marvellous memory, which placed under his hand the entire range of great works: these wondrous gifts filled the minds of his numberless friends and admirers with doubts as to whether his nervous

power could possibly sustain him through the length of an ordinary life. He would invariably have a leaf of paper and pen or pencil at hand when conversing, to sketch down whatever occurred to him. To spend any time in mere talk caused him to look frequently at his watch, by which he sometimes gave offence; his impatience was only satisfied when something was being done, such as music, reading, chess, etc.

When not irritated or annoyed by some "common person," as he would say, his manners were most pleasing. His features, of the real Jewish, oriental type, were decidedly handsome; a high, thoughtful forehead, depressed at the temples; large, expressive dark eyes, with drooping lids, and a peculiar veiled glance through the lashes; this however sometimes flashed distrust or anger, sometimes happy dreaming and expectancy. His nose was arched, and of delicate form; still more so the mouth, with its short upper and full under lip, which was slightly protruded, and hid his teeth, when, with a slight lisp, he pronounced the hissing consonants.

I saw and conversed with Mendelssohn, in Birmingham, the day after the production of his *Elijah*. I showed him a manuscript anthem and a small organ piece. He glanced over them with his penetrating

eyes; and, whilst I trembled to hear his opinion, he said, with such a kind manner and sweet voice: "Very nice indeed; very good. But you must work hard at composition, and then you will reveal new beauties. Are you not," he asked, "a pupil of the great organist, Wesley?" "Yes," I said; "but not of the Samuel Wesley you heard play the organ in London, who was my master's father, and also a wonderful organist." "Oh! of course," he quickly replied; "I remember being told by Dr. Gauntlett that there were two Wesleys—father and son—both almost equally famous for playing extemporaneous fugues on the organ." I said that that was so; the only difference being that "Old Sam Wesley," as he was familiarly styled, was not a great pedal player, whilst his son, Dr. Samuel Sebastian (named after the famous Bach, from his father's admiration of that wonderful musician's works), was a skilled pedaller, and had written and often played a fugue in C sharp minor that bothered many a hard-working organ student. Mendelssohn then bade me a courteous farewell. On the next day he played an organ solo, John Sebastian Bach's splendid prelude and fugue in B minor. This was a delightful treat to me, an enthusiastic young organist, who had read of his organ performances on Bach's old organ in Leipsic, and on which I myself played some years

afterwards (in 1871); indeed, the performance of *Elijah*, the conversation with and the organ playing of Mendelssohn, nearly sent me mad with musical joy; nothing but the lovely *Elijah* airs, and the marvellous grandeur of Bach's prelude and fugue, entered my mind for days and days afterwards. I thought of it by day, and dreamt of it by night; there was no rest, no work, for I gave up all to the lovely reminiscences of those two days with Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

After the Birmingham Festival of 1846, Mendelssohn returned to his dear wife and beloved home at Leipsic, full of fame and glory, and laden with English golden tributes to his work, that, well off as he was, he had not the weakness to despise. But his mind had been overtaxed, and his health was impaired. The last performance he directed in Leipsic was that of *St. Paul*, on Good Friday, 1847; immediately after which he journeyed to London, where the committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society had offered him an engagement to direct the production of *Elijah*. He had great trouble with what Benedict called a "most unruly and inefficient chorus"; and his excitable temper was painfully tried by the incredible difficulty and trouble he had in impressing and carrying with him the inert intelligence of his sluggish interpreters.

He returned home, after his labours, greatly tired and depressed by this dreadful fatigue of chorus rehearsal and drilling; and the change which had already manifested itself within him became only too perceptible in his outward appearance.

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and her consort, Prince Albert, had requested a performance of *Elijah*, with the composer as conductor; and it took place in their presence, and, of course, with an overwhelming audience, in Exeter Hall, on Friday, April 23rd, 1847. I went to London on purpose to witness this event; and the performance was, taken as a whole, very fine, but not at all equal to that of the Birmingham Festival; and, as the novelty was gone, it did not produce in my mind the same excitement. But the Londoners, who then heard the work for the first time, and in the presence of royalty (a matter of considerable importance in *their* estimation!), were almost mad with delight; their enthusiasm knew no bounds; and all the rules of etiquette and obedience to "the powers" were set aside in their wild efforts to express the joy they experienced in listening to the hallowed strains of *Elijah*, and in seeing its immortal composer conduct the work himself. Prince Albert was, as most of us know, a really good musician, a clever composer, and an expert organist; he was therefore capable of appre-

ciating Mendelssohn's genius, and of thoroughly enjoying the musical treat which the Queen had commanded. What he thought of that performance, and of the work itself, may be best learnt from the inscription he wrote on the book of the oratorio a few days after :

"To the noble artist, who, surrounded by the Baal-worship of corrupted art, has been able by his genius and science to preserve faithfully, like another Elijah, the worship of true art, and once more to accustom our ear, lost in the whirl of an empty play of sounds, to the pure notes of expressive composition and legitimate harmony; to the great master, who makes us conscious of the unity of his conception, through the whole maze of his creation, from the soft whispering to the mighty rage of the elements.—Written in token of grateful remembrance, by ALBERT.

"BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

"April 24th, 1847."

I remained in London until the 26th, on purpose to hear Mendelssohn's symphony in A minor, and his performance of Beethoven's great pianoforte concerto in G.

It is impossible to forget such an evening as that.



FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

Mendelssohn played the whole work from memory; and he introduced an extemporaneous cadenza, worthy of Beethoven himself, and which positively electrified the audience, Prince Albert included. It was only for a few minutes that I could speak to Mendelssohn on that night, and I did not attempt to detain him, for there were many eminent persons waiting; but I noticed, young as I was then, how exhausted he seemed, how deadly pale he became, and indeed how that the finger of grim death was already upon him.

He went from London to Frankfort, but not without an overpowering sense of fatigue, and with depressed energies. A friend in London, on whom he called to say "farewell," told me that, on expressing his wish that he could stay longer, Mendelssohn replied: "Ah! I wish I may not already have stayed too long here! One more week of this unremitting fatigue, and I should be killed outright!"

He had overworked his brain; and, on his return to Leipsic, he was seized with the illness which proved fatal on November 4th, 1847. Personally, he was gone; musically, he lived. "Art is long, and time is fleeting," said the sweet poet Longfellow. And is not this true of Mendelssohn? His music, and his exquisite, tender, expressive playing, will never die—never!

His death was felt as a general calamity, for his life was not only that of a great musician, a splendid player and a wonderful composer, but he was a good man; he led a life of spotless purity, and his rare faculties were entirely devoted to the highest ends of art. Can we then withhold our admiration from such a man? Let me ask those who care to know more of Mendelssohn to read Lady Wallace's translation of his letters from Italy, and that most interesting and improving life by his friend Sir Julius Benedict.

In company with my good friend, Henry Smart, I used for some years to go every autumn to the famous hostelry, the Falcon, at Gravesend, which was kept by the once celebrated Charles Lockey, who was the original tenor in the *Elijah*, and who married the distinguished contralto, Martha Williams. Among other art treasures that he showed and valued most, was a recitative which was written by Mendelssohn on the instant, at the Birmingham Festival of 1846. It was discovered, on the last day of the performance, that a work by Handel was lacking in the recitative. The directors were perplexed. Mendelssohn, who was sitting in an ante-room of the Hall, heard of it, and said, "Wait, I will help you." He sat down directly at a table, and composed the music for

the recitative and the orchestral accompaniment. It was at once transcribed, and given without rehearsal. "The inspiration of the moment," says his biographer, "worked on the performers as it did on the composer, and the passage went very finely."

Sir George Macfarren and Mr. J. W. Davison (the latter the well-known eminent musical critic of the *Times* for twenty-five years, and the husband of Madame Arabella Goddard) wrote long and eloquently, whenever they had an opportunity, in various influential newspapers, respecting Mendelssohn and his marvellous creations; and, as a proof of Davison's influence and power of writing, I append the following interesting notice from the *Times*:—

"By the general consent of the musical world, the name and works of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy are now honourably associated with those of the greatest masters in music. No composer—not even excepting Handel—exercised more immediate influence over the writings of his period than Mendelssohn. He was, *per se*, the *beau idéal* of a genuine artist. Unlike his great predecessors—Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven—he never had to seek, by the exercise of his talents, that which sways the world, and is necessary to keep body

and soul together. Born of wealthy parents, and afforded every possible opportunity to exercise that God-gift genius with which he was endowed, Mendelssohn soon attained to a perfection as a composer, organist, and pianist, which none, except Mozart, had ever before reached at so early an age. The marvellous *Midsummer Night's Dream* music, produced at the early age of eighteen, at once convinced the world that another great composer had sprung up, whose works were destined to exercise on the Divine art great and enduring influence. There is now hardly a musician to be found in Europe who does not perform or study Mendelssohn's music; and it is not too much to say that there is scarcely a writer whose compositions, more or less, are not imbued with his spirit and peculiarity. The universal love of Mendelssohn's music pervades all classes of society; in short, no young lady's portfolio is considered complete without some *morceau* by this illustrious composer."

I will now close what I fear is an imperfect and insufficient sketch of my acquaintance with Mendelssohn by a quotation from Sir George Grove's exhaustive and beautiful biography, in his most useful and admirable "Dictionary of Music and Musicians":—

"Few instances can be found in the history of

a man so amply gifted with every good quality of mind and heart, so carefully brought up among good influences, endowed with every circumstance that would make him happy, and so thoroughly fulfilling his mission,—never perhaps could any man be found, in whose life there were so few things to conceal and to regret. . . . It is well in these agitated modern days to be able to point to one perfectly balanced nature, in whose life, whose letters, and in whose music alike, all is at once manly and refined, clever and pure, brilliant and solid."

IV.

DR. LOUIS SPOHR.

TWO years over a hundred, at the present date, Louis Spohr was born in Brunswick, in the house of his grandfather, a clergyman. His father was a physician, and both father and mother were musical; the former played the flute, the latter was pianist and singer. Thus it was that, as with all the great composers, Louis was surrounded from his cradle with an atmosphere of music, harmonious sounds haunting him day and night throughout his childhood.

From his infancy, he was fond of the open air and of birds. At four years of age, he was deeply impressed by a thunderstorm, when he sat down in a corner of the room, and looked in mournful silence straight before him. At that moment, the roof of clouds, which till then had darkened the wintry sky, was rent asunder; a sunbeam fell into the little nursery-room; and, as it struck the cage

of a golden-winged canary hanging before the window, the bird turned his little head up in delight, hopped a few times from one perch to the other, and then began to warble and trill a song that was bright and joyous as the clear blue sky. When the storm had passed over, and little Louis had awakened from his semi-stupor, his face brightened up wondrously; his eyes were beaming, his cheeks grew ruddy; a rapt and passionate expression, far beyond his years, gave to the childish face a strange, unearthly look.

Spohr never forgot that incident of his childhood. He listened attentively to the ringing trills of his feathered pet, and at that moment all the world to the boy musician was in that song. While he listened to those sweet, enchanting tones, music seemed to touch every fibre of nerve and brain with thrills of ecstasy, till his soul itself seemed to throb on in musical pulsation—the shadowy, vanishing presage of an immortal harmony which one day will ring throughout the world. Just seventy years after this incident of his childhood, I visited Dr. Louis Spohr at Cassel, in 1858, the year in which he conducted his beautiful opera, *Jessonda*, with wonderful energy, at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Prague Musik Conservatorium.

He was then seventy-four, but as full of life,

cheerfulness, and vivacity as a young man. He died in the following year, and thus closed the long life of a man and an artist who had to the full developed the great talents and powers given to him; who throughout a long career had lived up to the ideal he had conceived in his youth; in whom private character and artistic activity corresponded to a rare degree, even in their foibles and deficiencies. Unlike his friend Mendelssohn, who was only of middle height and of slender frame, Spohr was a very tall, powerful-looking man; but in his manners he was as quiet and as gentle as a child.

I remember perfectly well the extraordinary impression the first hearing of Spohr's music made upon my youthful mind, when a chorister in Exeter Cathedral. The six head choir boys, and a quartet of lay vicars, were asked to the house of the deputy organist, to try over some parts of a new oratorio, the *Last Judgment*. After singing over three or four numbers, the old choir men looked at each other in blank astonishment. At last, old Potter, who was then over seventy, said, with true Devonshire accent and burr: "Well, I never did hear the like of this music in all my life before. He must be a reg'lar crazed chap. Never heard such chords. He must be mad; he be that."

After the delivery of this Devonshire wisdom of

the period, we tried the pieces over a second time; and, having finished with that lovely tenor solo and chorus, "Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto Him," the old singing duffers arrived at the sapient conclusion, that after all there was "summat" in it, and that a further acquaintance might ripen into admiration.

And, sure enough, it did so after awhile; so that, when Dr. Wesley came to Exeter in 1835, full of Spohr, like all the musicians of the day, we were not quite so unprepared for the change, from the old diatonic ecclesiastical music to which we had been accustomed to the rich and luscious harmonies of Spohr, as might reasonably have been expected.

I first made the acquaintance of Dr. Louis Spohr in Westminster Abbey, in 1853. It was on the occasion of a Purcell commemoration day. With Henry Smart, Dr. Edward Hopkins, Charles E. Stephens, Attwood, Walmsley, and other musical celebrities, I put on a surplice and sang in the choir. It was soon whispered about that the great composer Spohr, with his wife, and Adolphe Hesse, the distinguished German organist, were in the stalls. Naturally, I frequently observed them. Madame Spohr, who in her younger days had been a brilliant harpist, seemed to share with her famous husband and nephew the deep, absorbing interest

the two latter musicians evidently took in the service.

Especially do I remember noticing what attention Spohr paid to the chanting of Tallis's glorious old harmonies to the Church's versicles and responses, and to the prolongation of the final soft notes of the choir in that vast, vaulted building, whose lofty aisles seem to embrace the sounds, as if anxious to retain them.

At the conclusion of the service, several English organists very much wished to hear Herr Hesse perform on the Abbey organ; and one of us, who spoke German rather worse than the others, ventured to ask him to "favour us with a toon," as a Scotchman once asked me. C. E. Jekyll (then Turle's deputy, and afterwards of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal), Edward Hopkins, and I, went to the organ with Hesse, who, after drawing three or four foundation stops, put down the chord of A flat. Well, the sort of shriek he gave when he heard the unequal temperament of the tuning was scarcely in keeping with the solemn sacredness of the building; but he was resolute in his refusal to play; and so we were all greatly disappointed, and much regretted that the old, bad system of organ tuning—now, thank goodness! obsolete—had been allowed to remain in the Westminster Abbey organ.

Hesse, who was a broad, thick-set German, whilst he shrugged his broad shoulders, said that he should like to hear one of us play in a key that *was* in tune; so we persuaded Hopkins to seat himself at the organ. And he rather astonished both Spohr and his nephew by playing from memory, with perfect ease and accuracy, John Sebastian Bach's grand and difficult fugue in G minor.

When we had all taken a respectful, kindly leave of our distinguished visitors, we held a consultation respecting the employment of the rest of the day; agreed that we would have a nice little Italian dinner in Princess Street, and afterwards, as was then the custom, visit Cremorne Gardens. The very first person we spotted when entering the refreshment-room at Cremorne (for coffee only, of course!) was Herr Adolphe Hesse, who was busy sucking the straw in a sherry cobbler.

"Mundebarerstaunlich!" exclaimed our Teutonic friend. "Erstaunenswerth!"

"Smart, my dear fellow," I said, "his German is altogether too high for me. What does it mean?"

"Oh!" said Smart, "it means that when he has finished his first glass of sherry cobbler, he will be pleased to take another with you."

"What an unselfish, generous man he is!" said I.

It was then suggested that we should all adjourn

to a quiet, retired place in the gardens, and smoke our cigars in a secluded spot, known only to the clever few, and chat over the interesting musical events of the day. Away we jolly musicians went, laughing and cracking jokes, some of them at the expense of our learned brother organist, Adolphe Hesse. I was just relating one, when we came to what Smart called the "Harbour of Refuge." To our utter amazement, there was Herr Adolphe in the little summer house, talking away glibly with a bonny German girl—"Fräulein," as he called her—known, he said, to his aunt, Madame Spohr. The moment he saw us he seemed bewildered; and, uttering one or two sweet exclamations, such as, "Abscheulichwilerwärtig," "Holperigtchrectleicheit," he rapidly left us; and I never again from that moment saw anything of Spohr's nephew, the clever organist, Adolphe Hesse, who wrote the famous air and variations in A flat, known to all players on "the king of instruments."

Spohr, in the early part of his career, greatly distinguished himself as a violinist, upon which instrument he was a grand performer, and for which he has written a large amount of music. His "Violin School" is a marvel of talent and industry, and will last as long as the instrument itself. His compositions are as varied as they are numerous and

beautiful, ranging from the grand oratorio to the simple song and dance. It was in 1830 that Spohr's celebrated work, the *Last Judgment*, was first made known in England, at the Norwich Festival. Its rich, original, luscious harmonies quite fascinated our English musicians, who, in many instances, failed not to avail themselves of Spohr's style; so that the term "Spohr-ish" soon became associated with a large number of the compositions which were produced at that and at subsequent periods by our native composers.

Spohr indulged freely in chromatics and enharmonic changes, and these peculiarities are everywhere manifested in nearly all his works. He was fond, one of his biographers says, of experiments in composition, such as new combinations of instruments (to wit, the double quartets, the symphony for two orchestras, the quartet concerto, and others), or adoption of programmes ("consecration of sound, concertino, past and present," etc.), and thus showed his eagerness to strike out new paths.

But after all, what do we find under these new dresses and fresh-invented titles, but the same dear old Spohr, incapable of putting on a really new face, even for a few bars?

"Napoleon," says Robert Schumann (*à propos* of Spohr's *Historical Symphony*) "once went to a

masked ball; but, before he had been in the room many minutes, folded his arms in his well-known attitude. 'The emperor! the emperor!' at once ran through the place. Just so, through the disguises of the symphony, one kept hearing 'Spohr! Spohr!' in every corner of the room." There can be no doubt as to Spohr's originality; in fact, his style and manner are so entirely his own, that no composer is perhaps so absolutely unmistakable as he is.

Certain melodious phrases and cadences, chromatic progressions, and enharmonic modulations, in themselves beautiful enough and most effective, occur over and over again, until they appear to partake more of the nature of mechanical contrivances than to be the natural emanations of a living musical organism.

Nothing truer was ever said of Spohr as a composer, than by Arrey von Dommer, who remarked, "Spohr's innate inclination for the dreamy, elegiac, and sentimental, his inability to widen the rather narrow range of his personal manner of feeling, prevented the free objectivity in his compositions." Indeed, Spohr always remained too much himself; his gift of identifying his individuality with anything beyond his natural disposition was not great; and thus he lacked that charm of variety possessed in such an eminent degree by Mozart, Haydn, and

Beethoven. Everywhere we can discern a warm and sincere feeling, a refined appreciation of the poetic appearances and impressions of nature, combined with a tendency to surround everything with a romantic cloud, which somewhat interferes with the necessary clearness, conciseness, firmness, and healthy strength.

Professor Ella, in his most interesting book entitled "Musical Sketches," tells us that, in 1865, after the programmes had announced the performance of Spohr's Concertante Trio, Op. 119, he received by post two notes containing the following remarks :

No. 1. "I really cannot stand these chromatics of friend Spohr, so pray allow me to transfer my ticket for the next union."

No. 2. "I anticipate a very great treat next Tuesday, as I see that Hallé is to play my favourite trio by Spohr."

Well might Mr. Ella head his anecdote with the old Latin maxim, *De gustibus non est disputandum*.

No notice of Spohr would be at all valuable, without an allusion to or a notice of his extraordinary "Autobiography," a most interesting and amusing account extending over 300 pages, of his personal doings and reminiscences of music and musicians. Every one interested in the art will read

with considerable advantage Spohr's account of his visit to Beethoven :

"Upon my arrival in Vienna, I immediately paid a visit to Beethoven. I did not find him at home, and therefore left my card. . . . At length I met him at the restaurant where I was in the habit of going with my wife every day at the dinner hour. He was very chatty, which much surprised the company, as he was generally taciturn and sat gazing listlessly before him. His rough and even repulsive manners at that time arose partly from his deafness and partly from his unfounded fear of poverty. His manner of conducting an orchestra was something extraordinary. He accustomed himself to give the signs of expression to the band by all manner of eccentric motions of his body. So often as the *sforzando* occurred, he tore his arms, which he had previously crossed upon his breast, with great vehemence asunder. At a *piano* passage, he bent himself down, and the lower the softer he wished to have it. Then, when a *crescendo* came, he raised himself again by degrees; and upon the commencement of the *forte* sprang bolt upright! To increase the *forte* yet more, he would sometimes also join in with a shout to the orchestra, without being aware of it."

But those who wish to know more of Spohr should

obtain a list of his lovely compositions, not overlooking my favourite song, "The bird and the maiden," with or without violin *obbligato*.

One little incident connected with this great composer's music, and I have finished my sketch. A distinguished French pianist, the composer of many brilliant pianoforte pieces and of a highly popular English song, was once my guest; and when after dinner he played to the ladies in the drawing-room, and had pretty nearly exhausted his half-a-dozen brilliant pieces, I asked him to play with me as a duet Spohr's beautiful overture to *Jessonda*, which commences in 6-4 time in E flat minor, and then proceeds to a lovely theme in the E flat major. Henry Smart was present; and he and I were both astonished to find that this brilliant pianist—a pet of the aristocracy—could not play half-a-dozen bars of the duet without committing the most fearful mistakes and making dreadful blunders. So much, we said, for a popular *virtuoso*!

Spohr fell on the ice at Cassel while skating in 1859, broke his arm, took to his bed, and died in a fortnight. Truly, he was a great musician!

V.

MEYERBEER.

MENDELSSOHN and Schumann were both rather unkind in their criticisms of Meyerbeer, who, though somewhat of a trickster in the production of his grand operas, was nevertheless a sterling musician. He had genius and power; he was a fine pianist as a boy, a virtuoso of the first rank when a young man. No doubt he played "tricks," and appropriated the style and ideas of other composers occasionally; but is not this the case generally? It is merely a question of degree, of not breaking indeed Horace Walpole's eleventh commandment, "Thou shalt not be found out."

It may be weakness on my part, want of judgment or knowledge, or "something" (as the cranky, crook-neck critics say), but I confess to have experienced some of the happiest, most musical sensational hours of my life in listening to Meyerbeer's operas, *Les Huguenots* and *Robert le Diable*, at Covent Garden theatre, with Grisi and Mario as the principal artistes. No musician can fail to remember

the grand effects Meyerbeer produces at the close of the second act in *Les Huguenots*; the music is genuine, powerful, and dramatic in the highest degree, and exactly suited to the exciting situation.

Then the melodies in that opera, "Nobil Signor," to wit, and the wonderful introduction of the old Protestant chorale, "Ein' feste burg," are all the productions and treatment of a great, a learned, and an original musician. And yet Schumann—the generally kind and thoughtful Schumann—ventures to say, after hearing *Les Huguenots*, that Meyerbeer "often descends to tricks that find a home in the superficial atmosphere of popular applause." No doubt all great men make mistakes, and occasionally commit blunders; indeed their greatness and individuality almost entirely depend upon their rapidity of thought and quickness of action, leading them on the one side to Parnassus and Helicon, and on the other to Vaudeville and Pulcinello. But Schumann goes further, and says (after hearing the opera well performed at Leipsic): "I place Meyerbeer at once among Franconi's circus people! I cannot express the aversion which the whole work inspired in us; we turned away from it; we were weary and inattentive from anger. After frequently hearing it, I found much that was excusable, much that impressed me favourably in it, but my final

judgment remained the same as at first; and I must shout incessantly to those who place *Les Huguenots* at ever so great a distance beside *Fidelie*, or anything of the kind, that they understand nothing about it—nothing! nothing! . . . In vain we seek for one pure, lasting idea, one spark of Christian feeling in it. Meyerbeer nails a heart on the outside of a skin, and says, ‘Look! there it is, to be grasped with hands.’”

Every musical reader knows that Schumann died in a madhouse; and surely the above is a specimen of one of the hallucinations under which he laboured before his unfortunate malady produced such serious results.

Meyerbeer was a great operatic and dramatic composer in every and the fullest sense of the term, and Schumann’s estimate of him is altogether a misconception and a very sad mistake. No doubt Meyerbeer’s operas are distinguished chiefly for their extraordinary, startling effects, both histrionic and musical. *Robert le Diable*, *Les Huguenots*, and *Dinorah* are his chief and most attractive operas; and they contain not only grand spectacular scenes, but melodies and concerted music of the most fascinating character. An extraordinary fuss and bother was made about his last grand opera, *L’Africaine*, which he would not allow to be per-

formed until after his decease, and about which he was always provokingly mysterious. Its merits are variously estimated by the critics, some affirming it to be Meyerbeer's greatest work, others denying its right to be placed anywhere near his earlier operas.

Before I allude to my personal knowledge of this distinguished musician, I may mention *en passant* that he was born in Berlin in 1791, and died in Paris in 1864. His family name was Beer, and his forename Meyer, which in early life he compounded into one. Like Mendelssohn, he was the son of a banker, and, having ample funds, was never dependent upon the exercise of his profession for his support.

I first met this illustrious composer, and was introduced to him, in 1855, at one of the concerts of "The Musical Union," conducted so ably for many years by the late Professor Ella, at Willis's Rooms in London. We sat together, and, at the conclusion of each movement of Beethoven's lovely first trio in E flat for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, we compared notes; and, as I was the junior by a great many years, I naturally listened respectfully to the observations of my distinguished, experienced, and learned neighbour.

At the conclusion of the piece I exclaimed, "O sir, is not that lovely, divine music?"

"It is," he uttered quickly; "it is indeed charming; so fresh, so genial, and so beautiful."

"Do you remember," I said, "the story of the first performance of that trio?"

"No," said Meyerbeer, "but I shall be pleased to hear it; and as I don't care much about this next piano solo, we will adjourn to the ante-room, and you can there tell me all about it."

"It is not long, but very interesting," I said. "Beethoven was scarcely sixteen years of age; and, having been invited to the house of Madame von Breuning (the widow of a privy councillor), in the Münster Platz, in Bonn, where he would meet, he was told, Capellmeister Franz Ries, several members of the elector's orchestra, the brothers Andreas and Bernhardt Romberg (celebrated performers on the violin and violoncello), and other artistes, he had resolved, at the suggestion of his student friend Wegeler, to produce a trio without divulging the name of the composer. The copies were forthcoming; and, after a song from the lovely young Fräulein Jeanette von Honrath, of Cologne—Beethoven's first love—Count Waldstein (who was in the secret) said to the musical gentlemen: 'Our kind hostess informed me of your presence in her circle this evening. Now I have just received a trio which has been much recommended to me; and, upon find-

ing this assemblage of talent, I cannot express to you what satisfaction it would afford me, and I believe yourselves likewise, were you to give this work a trial.'

"From all sides came an affirmative, mingled with inquiries as to the name of the composer, and whispered surmises that the count, who was known to be an excellent musician, had perhaps himself produced the work.

"'I propose,' said Waldstein, 'that we put aside for the present the question of the composer, and proceed to the music; we may then perhaps be able to discover the artiste through his work.'

"This suggestion was agreed to unanimously. The Count then suggested that the two Rombergs and young Beethoven should give it the trial; and, although playing *prima vista*, they led off with both precision and expression, producing a decided and most favourable effect upon the audience. The *scherzo* especially astonished them with its original form and general vigour.

"A full meed of praise was heartily bestowed upon the unknown composer.

"'Well, and by what master is it?' asked Wegeler.

"'It cannot be Haydn; it is too passionate,' said the elder Romberg.

"'Neither is it by Mozart,' added his brother

Bernhardt; 'some gloomy passages and eccentricities prevent it from being his.'

"'At all events,' said Ries, 'it is by a man who thoroughly understands his work.'

"'Sir Count, step forth from your modest obscurity,' said Madame Breuning playfully, turning to the chevalier.

"'I will indeed expound the riddle,' rejoined the count. 'The composer of this trio is young Ludwig von Beethoven!'

"Upon the faces of all present the most undisguised astonishment was perceptible. The musicians looked as if something had fallen from the clouds. To the first expressions of surprise succeeded a general congratulation of the talented boy, given with intense heartiness by all present. "This," I said to Meyerbeer, "if I read and remember aright, was Beethoven's first triumph as a composer; and he went home to his humble dwelling that night filled with tumultuous joy and undefinable hopes."

"That's a very pretty story about the lovely trio we heard just now; and I thank you," said Meyerbeer, with a graceful bow, "for relating it to me. And now we will return to the concert-room, and listen to Mendelssohn's beautiful canzonetta in G minor, which I heard played for the first time in Berlin a short time ago."

That evening I went to Covent Garden theatre to hear and see Meyerbeer's magnificent opera *Le Prophète*. The composer was in a private box, with Davison of the *Times* and some other musicians; and I joined them just before the great coronation scene came on. All musical people know the march in *Le Prophète*; if they do not, they ought. It is introduced into one of the most gorgeous scenes ever produced on the stage, where the infatuated John of Leyden, having been worked upon by three anabaptists, and led to consider himself as the prophet (from which the opera takes its title), suffers himself to be taken to his coronation; and during the passage of the procession the grand march is performed by a double band—the usual one in the orchestra and a brass one on the stage. "The march," said Meyerbeer, "is finely played, but Costa takes it too fast, as is the custom in England, but not in France or Germany; it is much more dignified when given more slowly, and then the chords in triplets come out more distinctly." Ella relates that he was walking with Meyerbeer in 1852 at Spa, when the band played this "Coronation March," and he remarked to the composer that the London orchestras performed it much quicker. "*Pourquoi?*" replied the maestro. The only answer Ella gave him was, "In England *time is money!*"

During that same visit of mine to London, Meyerbeer's beautiful opera *Dinorah* was produced; and I had the great delight of listening to a very fine performance of the work at Covent Garden, and hearing Madame Sontag sing that exquisite production, "The Shadow Song." The plot of *Dinorah* chiefly hangs upon something which has taken place twelve months previously, the *dénouement* being the anniversary of the event. Without going into the plot (which is romantic and interesting), I may say that it is the custom of the peasants of Ploermel, a village of Brittany, in the north of France, to make a pilgrimage once a year to the chapel of the Virgin; and the beautiful prayer, "Sancta Maria" (which used to be a great favourite with the members of the Leeds Madrigal and Motet Society), is supposed to be their song. The opera closes with one of these anniversaries, when *Dinorah* (the heroine) is, with her lover, on her way to the chapel to be married—"an old institution," which it appears "is carried on still," both there, here, and everywhere.

Meyerbeer attended the great Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace in 1860; and it so happened that my seat, which was an excellent one, about twelve rows from the front of the orchestra, was next to his on that day, the day of days, the day on which there was a performance of the greatest choral work,

the greatest oratorio, the greatest musical conception the world ever knew or heard, Handel's masterpiece, *Israel in Egypt*.

"Superb! superb!" I kept hearing Meyerbeer exclaim in an undertone, but earnest and vehement. "Magnifique! magnifique!" Indeed, it was evidently with great difficulty that he restrained himself from standing up and shouting out expressions of wonder and delight.

During the continuous roll of the great bass passages towards the end of the "Hailstone" chorus, he was deeply impressed and considerably excited; and when I told him that many of those noble voices he had been listening to were members of my own Yorkshire Choral Society, he was profuse in his compliments, and said how much he should like to attend one of our Leeds musical festivals, of which he had read and heard highly favourable reports. I assured him that if he did honour Yorkshire with a visit, we would take good care that he should hear such a chorus, and such grand, ponderous bass voices, as could not probably be surpassed, if equalled, in Europe; "and I will also," I added, "give you a taste of the quality of our magnificent organ, which contains one hundred and thirty-four stops and pedals of adjustment, and of which the

Leeds people and your humble servant are very justly proud."

"Now tell me," said Meyerbeer, "how do your Yorkshire vocalists learn singing—on what system?"

"Formerly," I replied, "I believe that nearly all the singers in the north of England learnt vocalization, or *vocalizzi*, as the Italians have it, upon the old Lancashire system of the movable *Do*, using only the names of four out of the seven notes, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, something akin to the present unrequired and unnecessary tonic sol-fa method; only with this very important difference, that in the former, the notes are *seen*, and have, as you know, a living charm; but in the latter there are no notes, but a letter system of notation, which, personally, I greatly dislike and never will use."

"You are right, you are right," Meyerbeer quickly answered. "There is no singing system like the old Italian sol-fa, which is indeed almost identical with that of the Frenchman Wilhem, and has been, I believe, most successfully introduced into England by Hullah."

"I am so glad, sir," I said, "that my views on this important question of learning to sing seem to be quite in accordance with your own."

Meyerbeer then intimated that the half-hour in-

terval having arrived, he would "go and see Costa, and get a glass of wine—*à la cuiller*."

I saw no more of the composer of *Les Huguenots* until the spring of 1862, when he visited London for the purpose of hearing the rehearsals of his grand march or overture, which he had composed at the request of the Commissioners for the inauguration of the International Exhibition. This extraordinary, lengthy work, which subsequently I often played at my organ recitals, is chiefly remarkable for the introduction and treatment of our national song, "Rule Britannia!" the composer having made use of it in almost every conceivable way—fugally, augmented, attenuated, developed, abridged, right side down, wrong side up, exaggerated, aggravated, diminished, shrunk, etc.

Macfarren says of it: "The work was extravagantly lauded in the papers, and such of the public as did not hear it mistook this irony for admiration."

Some of Meyerbeer's marches are extremely grand and effective, and bear the unmistakable stamp of genius and power. Remarkable is his "Schiller March"; and so are others composed for the marriage ceremonies of the king of Bavaria with the Princess of Prussia in 1847, of the princesses Anne and Charlotte of Prussia in 1853, and of Prince Frederick William with our Princess Royal in 1858, and also

one for the king's coronation in 1861. They were all scored for full bands of either mixed or military instruments; but they are very effective on the piano-forte, and infinitely more so on the organ—the larger the better.

The most important vocal music Meyerbeer composed was his setting of the ninety-first psalm and of the Lord's Prayer, both for unaccompanied chorus. In these works there is a largeness of conception, an originality of treatment, and legitimate musical effects, not surpassed by any similiar compositions of the great masters.

There can be question that Meyerbeer tried hard to be original, and his conceptions were certainly as novel as they were fearlessly carried out. He was a man of quick thought and rapid action, and he never allowed his talent to be lost to the world for the want of a little courage. The fact is, as Sydney Smith said, "that in order to do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand shivering on the bank, and thinking of the cold and the danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can." It will not do to be perpetually calculating risks and adjusting nice chances, consulting your friends, cousins, aunts, or even your uncle, until you find you have lost valuable time which can never be recovered.

Meyerbeer was fond of praise (I never knew an artist that was not, in a greater or less degree), and of money. He was extremely pleased when the papers lauded his somewhat rambling "Exhibition Overture," and more so when a rich publisher gave him 100 guineas for the copyright.

I only saw him for a short time after his 1862 exploit, but I found out that reputation was one of the prizes for which he had contended, and which he had won; and no doubt Burke was right when he said that "reputation was the chief defence and ornament of nations and the nurse of manly exertions"; indeed, it produces more labour and more talent than twice the wealth of a country could ever rear up. It is "the coin of genius," and it is the imperious duty of every man to bestow praise with scrupulous justice and wise economy.

After his last visit to London in 1862, he became enfeebled in health; but he recruited himself by visits to the favourite watering-places of Germany, and finally returned to Paris, where he died on May 2nd, 1864, at the ripe age of seventy-three.

VI.

DR. SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY.

NOTWITHSTANDING his many enemies and opponents—the able Dr. Gauntlett among the chief—there can be no doubt that Sebastian Wesley exercised during his lifetime a considerable amount of influence for good on the progress of church and organ music in this country. Like many other ecclesiastical composers, he was a musician from his cradle. His father, Samuel Wesley (one of the finest organists of the Bach school, and a pure vocal composer after the manner of Palestrina), and his distinguished relatives, John and Charles Wesley, were all surrounded from childhood with an atmosphere of music. Something was therefore expected, and something came from him.

Samuel Sebastian Wesley was born in London in 1810, and died at Gloucester in 1876. He held successively appointments as organist, in London, Hereford Cathedral, Exeter Cathedral, Leeds Parish Church, Winchester Cathedral, and, finally, at Gloucester Cathedral. In his earlier professional



SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY.

From a photograph.

career, he was impatient for change, and seems rarely to have remained in one place longer than six or seven years. He left Hereford on account of his unexpected marriage with the accomplished sister of Dean Merewether; he gave up Exeter because of his frequent disputes with the dean respecting the musical arrangements of the cathedral; and he departed from Leeds in consequence of Dr. Hook and himself being unable to work harmoniously together concerning the services and the choir. And yet, in all these cities and towns, his great musical genius was fully recognised and encouraged, though strange to say less perhaps in Leeds than anywhere else.

Leeds, when Wesley went to it in 1841, and when I accompanied him as his articulated pupil, was very different from the Leeds of to-day. Then it was one huge mass of dingy-looking mills, warehouses, poorly built houses, badly paved streets, uninviting shops, and huge chimneys that poured forth their miles of black smoke; begriming and blackening all that lay in its course. The generality of the inhabitants also at that time were brusque in their talk and manners, and were inclined to assert their independence, which Wesley often said meant impudence. He had not realized that under a rough exterior there often beats a soft and tender heart; he failed to give our "Leeds

loiners" credit for anything better than he saw upon the surface. No wonder then that Sebastian and his accomplished wife, who had been accustomed to the green fields, sweet meadows, lovely scenery, and grand architecture of Hereford and Exeter, could not endure Leeds, its dirt, smoke, and inhabitants in 1841, and that they were eternally grumbling and craving to go somewhere else.

But had Wesley known Leeds as it is now, with its magnificent town hall and organ, the wondrous change and improvement for the better in the enlarged streets, noble buildings, banks, warehouses, clubs, offices, churches, chapels, and the establishment of daily newspapers, etc., he would possibly have remained until his death, or at least until he could have left a larger mark, and accomplished greater things than he did. But I will return to his Leeds work, after we have seen him as he was at Exeter.

It was in 1835 that Wesley was appointed, at the age of twenty-five, organist and master of the choir of Exeter Cathedral. He looked much older than he was, being then slightly bald; and in after years he was denuded of all his black hair, and always wore a wig.

I had been a chorister for two years, and was then a mere child; but my father (a highly accomplished singer, possessing a beautiful natural shake, and

passionately fond of good music), being one of the vicar's choral, and my mother also liking music, and often singing sweetly to her children some of the dear old ballads of her girlhood, they determined to gratify my desire, and to have me taught singing and the pianoforte at the earliest possible period; so that, when Wesley came, I could not only admire his playing, but I was, though one of the youngest boys, soon able to assist him by taking the pianoforte or the organ (we had both in the singing school) at the choir boys' practices, which generally took place at half-past six in the morning—rather too early for Wesley, as a rule.

When I first heard him play on the organ, I was seized with reverential awe. It was at the close of the afternoon service in the cathedral. The choir men and choir boys were asked to remain in their stalls; and we all listened in rapt silence to Wesley's masterly playing—one or two pieces, but chiefly extemporaneous—for about forty minutes. My father looked wistfully at me more than once, as much as to say, "Now, my boy, we shall hear some music and organ playing that will delight us all, and do us good." And so it turned out, for, as we had been accustomed to hear very old-fashioned playing, with lumpy chords in the bass, and undistributed harmonies anywhere, we now heard for the

first time what organ playing was under the magic touch of a master like Wesley.

Shortly after this, he wished to introduce two of his anthems—since celebrated throughout the musical world—*The Wilderness* and *Blessed be the God and Father*; but, as the scores were in manuscript, copies had to be made in all the choir books, and this involved an outlay that frightened the worthy dean and chapter, and led to some small first unpleasantness with Wesley. Ultimately, the copies were ready, and all the choir went to his rooms to rehearse *The Wilderness and the Solitary Place*, a difficult anthem, which greatly exercised the minds and the voices of the choir at first, but which, when learnt, was pronounced to be one of the most beautiful original compositions ever heard. The choir had been greatly improved, and this, with Wesley's playing, and the introduction of better anthems and services, attracted large congregations to the cathedral.

In 1839, he was allowed to accumulate his degrees of Mus.Bac. and Mus.Doc. at Oxford; the work he composed for his exercise being a remarkably fine eight-part anthem, *O Lord, Thou art my God*, in which there is one of the most beautiful bass solos ever written. That precise and learned musician, Dr. Crotch, held the professorial chair at the time;

and he at first objected to accept the work, unless Wesley would expunge or alter some passages which he affirmed were not in accordance with the laws of harmony and modulation as practised by the great masters, and did not carry out the rules and precepts of the school-men. Wesley was obdurate, and refused to withdraw anything; so Professor Crotch had to give way. Wesley returned to Exeter with his gown, hood, degrees, and increased renown. Shortly after this, I became his articulated pupil for five years; and I made such progress in playing the cathedral services, that he often left me for two or three days, and would go off to one of the numerous rivers in Devonshire to exercise his favourite pastime of fly-fishing, "unbeknown to nobody," as Mrs. Gamp said.

On one of these occasions, he returned just in time to get into the organ loft while I was playing the outgoing voluntary; and he went out with me, as if he had himself been playing. Dr. Shapter, a well-known physician, who was in the habit of attending the week-day services, met us, and said to Wesley, "O doctor, what a charming introduction that was you played before the anthem—'In Thee, O Lord' (*Weldon*), this afternoon!" I heard Wesley answer in a whisper, "Pray, don't say so; it was this boy Spark, and he'll get too conceited if you let him

know your opinion." But I went home greatly elated, and dreamt that night of future successes in organ playing, some of which I hope have not been altogether unrealized.

In 1841, at the suggestion of Mr. Martin Cawood, an enthusiastic amateur, and an admirer of Wesley's anthems, etc., Dr. Hook, vicar of Leeds, offered Wesley the post of organist and choirmaster of the parish church, at a guaranteed salary of £200 for ten years. After some little difficulty at Exeter, where he left me to take the duty for three months, he finally settled in Leeds, and took a house in Albion Street; but he afterwards removed to Hanover Square and to other houses.

As I had two more years of my articles to serve, I joined him at Leeds, and generally went with him to most of the musical doings in the town, especially to the rehearsals of the Musical Society and of the Philharmonic, which he conducted either in the old Music Hall (now a business house warehouse, in Albion Street) or at the Mechanics' Institution. There being only one choral service at the Leeds parish church, he had more time than at Exeter, and began to do a little harder work at composition.

It was in Leeds that he composed his fine service in E (to the order of Mr. Martin Cawood, who gave him fifty guineas for the copyright); his wonderful

set of *Quadrilles* for the pianoforte, which are more like elaborate studies than dance music; the *Grand March* in C minor; and the beautiful *Rondo*, which follows, in C major. Wesley was no doubt in his prime during the first two or three years of his residence in Leeds; he was tolerably happy and successful; and he could have made plenty of money, had he not been so erratic and uncertain in his professional ways and doings. His fame and talents were on the lips of all Yorkshire musicians; they flocked in scores to hear his extempore fugues, etc., after the evening service—performances which were often of the grandest, most beautiful and most elaborate character. These were always best after one of his fishing excursions; he seemed to have returned like a musical giant refreshed with nature's glories and with invigorating air.

Soon he found out that trout-streams and plenty of fish were to be found in most of our Yorkshire rivers; and when he had secured the friendship and assistance of the late Mr. Greenwood, a well-known and clever organ builder in Leeds, the two would sally forth like another Izaak Walton and his friend, and give themselves up for days to the exercise of the gentle art. Sometimes they went to Bolton Abbey, to Kilnsey, or to some other favourite fishing spot on the Wharfe; now they would go to

Skipton and try the Aire; then to Helmsley, Wesley's favourite spot, and where late one evening he met with an unfortunate accident in getting over a high stile laden with a heavy creel, falling headlong on the other (deep) side, and sustaining a compound fracture of his left leg, from which he never entirely recovered. He was nearly six months laid up at Helmsley, unable to do anything but occasionally compose an anthem, one of his productions being the remarkable one, "Cast me not away from Thy presence," in E minor—short, but sublime in the dignity of its harmonies, and in their exact suitability to the words. The discords at the passage, "That the bones which Thou hast *broken*," should be especially noted, for their peculiar though characteristic power and effect.

Apart from his profession, Wesley's great delight was ever in the beauties of nature; he never cared about the noise and levity of "restless commercial towns"; the fields and the hills were to him the finest furniture in the world, the most gorgeous of all drawing-rooms, while the purlings of trout streams and the songs of birds were the finest harmony conceivable. He not only thus gained health, calmness of mind, and tranquillity of spirit, but his appetite for nature grew with what it fed upon, and, when he returned home, he seemed never to rest until

he could again get away to his beloved woods and streams,—and he liked to go *alone*, for more reasons than one.

One of his fishing excursions, on which I accompanied him, is worth recording. He had been engaged to give a series of lectures in Manchester on church music (lecturing was certainly not his *forte*); and he had occupied nearly the whole of my time for four months in copying out from old MSS. which had belonged to his father, as well as from the two celebrated Histories of Music by Burney and Hawkins, separate parts for the singers who were to illustrate the lectures.

Just before he left for Manchester, he said to me,—

“Now, Spark, you have worked hard and well at this copying business; and when I return, as I know you are fond of fly-fishing like myself, I will give you a treat up the Wharfe; we’ll have a right good day of it, and enjoy ourselves.”

“All right, doctor,” I replied; “that will suit me exactly.”

Shortly after his return, he intimated to me that the time had arrived to have the day’s fishing; and he asked me to call at the Nag’s Head, where the coach started at eight in the morning for Otley, and secure two outside places. I did so. We duly met,

and after some little difficulty about the payment of the fares, in which I came off second best, we started. On arriving at Otley, he said,—

“Now you get down on the same side as the coachman; I’ll drop over on the other; and you follow me up the hill as soon as you’ve got the rods and the net together.”

I did not in the least understand what all this meant, but I soon found out. When I had turned the corner, I saw him nearly at the top of the hill, going towards Ilkley as fast as legs could carry him. On my getting up to him, he said, rather excitedly,—

“Is he coming? Is he coming?”

“Who? What?” said I.

“The coachman! the coachman! Those fellows are great impostors, and always want an extra tip; but I was determined he shouldn’t do me this time.”

“Oh!” I said, “is that all?”

We walked on—it was a lovely summer’s day in June—and soon reached that charming spot known as “The Nunneries.” We adjusted our rods and flies, and then the doctor took a general survey of the river, which at that spot was just then very low, and quite wadeable.

“Dear me, look! They are rising well on the other side of the river. Do you mind, Spark, as

I'm not allowed to wade just now, taking off your shoes and stockings, tucking up your trousers, and carrying me across?"

"Doctor," I said, "I fear you'll be too heavy; but I'll do my best."

"Oh!" he added quickly, "*that* will be all right, as I'll carry the things, rods and all!"

He got on my back; I noticed that he was getting his right arm free with the rod and the flies in his hand; and just as I was suffering in the middle of the river from the sharpness of the stones on my bare feet, I said I feared I should fall with him. He exclaimed,—

"Now stand quite still; there's a fine trout rising just below there, and I can get at him nicely with a good throw."

"Doctor, doctor!" I shouted, as well as my nearly exhausted state would permit, "if I don't try to reach the bank at once, we *must* both tumble into the river."

I managed just to get through and fall on the bank breathless, and the doctor went clean over my head like a shuttlecock. He got up, and then stood for a moment regarding me with considerable contempt.

"I'm disgusted with you! Surely you could have stood with me for a few minutes while I got that

trout. I never behaved so to my master, and often as a boy carried him across the river when he went a fishing."

"Indeed!" said I; "what! across the Thames?"

After some further words we went on, then turned our way homeward, and in the afternoon, when I was dead beat with hunger, we landed at Arthington, and there partook of some bread and cheese and a glass of beer. "*Deo gratias*," I said to myself, "but I want to get back to my comfortable rooms in Leeds and take my rest"; for I was weary and foot-sore, and, being a rather slim, delicate boy of seventeen, working very hard every day as a musical student, I was not equal to much physical exertion at that time. On arriving, I found myself exhausted both in body and in purse, and was so ungrateful that I did not thank the seen, or the unseen, for that day's "fishing treat."

Wesley's published organ compositions are provokingly few. Beyond his variations on "God save the Queen," composed for the opening of the new organ at St. Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol; two sets of "Three Pieces for a Chamber Organ," dedicated to Lady Acland (who was his pupil when he was at Exeter); a fine introduction and fugue in C sharp minor; an *Andante*, written for the inauguration of Willis's organ in the Agricultural Hall; a volun-

tary *grave* and *andante* in D minor and F major, composed expressly for the *Organist's Quarterly Journal*, and a few smaller pieces,—nothing was produced worthy of the splendid talents of one who possessed sufficient inventive power to have written a hundred sonatas. But what he *has* left is sufficient to establish his individuality; and there can be no doubt that the careful study of the organ-pieces enumerated above must leave an impression on the mind of the earnest musician as pure and healthy as that produced by the best works of the great masters :

“ Rich in invention, fancy, and design—
Originality of thought was thine.”

As an organist, Wesley, in his prime, stood first and foremost. He was unquestionably one of the earliest and most successful performers of John Sebastian Bach's grand organ pedal fugues (which his father was the first to introduce into England at the beginning of this century); he was the first to suggest a greatly varied style and expression, and to infuse orchestral combinations and colouring into organ playing; he was a splendid choir accompanist; and, lastly, he was certainly one of the finest and most dignified extempore players of his day and generation.

Those pupils who, like myself, spent day after day with him for many years, and who have listened to the performances of other organists of the highest fame, can truly testify to Wesley's greatness as a player, *when he was in good form*. It would be idle to deny that he had not always his composing or playing cap on. He was wayward and difficult to persuade; and yet, when he *did* come out in all his power, it was with the stride of a giant, dwarfing all else into littleness.

His spontaneous introductions or preludes to anthems he liked cannot easily be forgotten. They were always in harmony with the leading subjects in the composition, ever adding new beauties to the thoughts and works of the original writers. For his concluding voluntaries, after service in church, as well as in public halls, he frequently extemporised fugues of considerable length and perfect development.

The last time I heard Wesley play was on July 31st, 1872, when he went with Sir Henry Dryden (a distinguished amateur, and a former pupil of mine) and myself to the Leeds Town Hall, to hear the grand organ; and, after expressing some little hesitation about playing on a large strange instrument, he sat down, and extemporised for half an hour in his former fine manner, concluding his performance

with a well wrought out fugue on a happy subject in F major.

We returned to the hotel; and the doctor, being in one of his best moods, entertained Sir Henry and myself with two or three organ anecdotes of a highly humorous character, though he did not give them with any particular effect or gusto.

“My father, Old Sam, as they used to call him in my younger days, was asked to deputise for Mr. Knyvett, a popular London organist and vocal composer, at a church where Bishop, the organ builder, had very recently put in a row of sixteen-feet open pedal pipes (a perfect novelty in those days), and which were used by Knyvett, who knew nothing about pedalling, about once in every four or six bars, probably at the beginning and ending of each phrase of a hymn tune. Well, my father knew something more about pedalling than this; and so, when he played the ‘Hallelujah Chorus,’ by desire of the vicar, as a concluding voluntary, and used the pedals considerably, of course the pipes took off more wind than usual. About twenty bars from the end, the organ stopped with a grunt and a gasp, and the old bellows-blower came to the organ pew and said, with a cockney twang and a swagger, ‘Well, Mr. Wesley, I thinks as how that everything has gone off beautiful to-night, and——’

“‘Why on earth, sir,’ said my father, ‘did you let out the wind long before I had finished my voluntary? You have spoilt my playing!’

“‘Well, now, come, Mr. Wesley, this won’t do, you know. Do you think that I have blowed this here organ for twenty-five years come Michaelmas next, and don’t know *how many strokes go to the Hallelujah Chorus?*’”

I may here, before I conclude, just add one little anecdote of Wesley’s eccentricities, which greatly amused me when I was a boy. It was in October, 1843, on a Friday evening, after Dr. Hook had been preaching an eloquent sermon in the Leeds parish church, that I walked home with Wesley as usual; he deviated towards Duncan Street, and suddenly went into an oyster shop.

“Will you be good enough,” he said to me, “to stand at the door while I get a few oysters and, if you see Dr. Hook coming—he often goes round this way towards home—let me know, and I’ll slip into the little back room until he has passed by?”

“All right, doctor; I’ll watch.”

But when he had partaken of two or three fine bivalves, without inviting me also to indulge, a sudden mischievous idea occurred to me, and at the moment he was raising another to his mouth, I shouted out, “Dr. Hook, Dr. Hook!”

In an instant the unshelled oyster fell on the sandy floor with a flop, and I heard Wesley slam the door of the little inner room. Of course I bolted, and took care to be out of the great master's way for some days afterwards.

Wesley, like Mozart, was allowed the highest bliss vouchsafed to mortals, "the joy and happiness of creating."

A few years before his death, Wesley was offered by the prime minister the option of a knighthood or a pension of £100 per annum, and I need scarcely say that he chose the latter. Among his best pupils may be mentioned Dr. Arnold, of Winchester, Dr. E. J. Gladstone, and the talented Kendrick Pyne, organist of the cathedral and town hall, Manchester.

Notwithstanding his oddities and his perversity, sufficient has been said, I hope, to show that Dr. Samuel Sebastian Wesley possessed a musical genius of no mean order; and that the honoured name of his father was worthily sustained and extended by the son, who never debased his art, but ever held up to himself an ideal of perfection which, if not always realized, at least helped to place him among the most esteemed of musical heroes.

VII.

SIR HENRY ROWLEY BISHOP.

"YES," I said to a lady querist, "I *can* tell you a little about Sir Henry Bishop, the composer of *Home, Sweet Home*, of my own personal knowledge, as he died only thirty years ago; and, although he was twice my own age, I remember perfectly well my interviews and my professional connection with him."

Sir Henry Rowley Bishop, Mus.Doc., was born in London in 1786, and died there in 1855, three years before the Leeds Town Hall was built.

The name of Bishop stands first and foremost in the list of our English dramatic composers. More than any other writer of the present century, he is entitled, in his walk, to take the lead. Thoroughly native, thoroughly English, he produced melodies imbued with the national spirit, which will die only with the English language.

Did he not give us *Home, Sweet Home*, "The Pilgrim of Love," "Bid me Discourse," "Should he

Upbraid," "Tell me, my Heart," "My Pretty Jane," "As it fell upon a day in the merry month of May," "Sleep, gentle Lady," "The Chough and Crow to roost are gone—it is our opening day," "The Winds whistle cold," "Mynheer van Dunck, though he never got drunk, drank brandy and water freely" (the most vigorous and melodious of all bacchanalian glees), and numbers of other pieces equally happy, genial, and beautiful? Did he not by his compositions cause English music to be esteemed both at home and abroad when the art was less cultivated here (in comparison with the rest of Europe) than at any other time? Did he not compose more operas than any other Englishman before or since?

Replying to these interrogatories in the affirmative, we have the reasons for the high place I venture to give Bishop, and for asserting that he is the most thoroughly English and original of all our native composers. Whilst thus much however is said, I am bound to add that Bishop's most successful productions were confined to dramatic concerted music, and to detached songs, duets, trios, glees, and operatic choruses. His attempts at sacred composition were certainly not to be commended; neither can I admire the patchwork class of pieces, such as *Come o'er the Brook*, *Bessie*, and *Oh, by Rivers*, made up of two or three reharmonized attractive pieces by

the old masters—a practice which, if applied to any other art, would certainly be instantly condemned.

The pieces I have quoted as examples of his genius were contained chiefly in his earlier operas, produced when he was happy, successful, and unrestrained in his aspirations; but his later compositions show a sad falling off; and it may naturally be inferred that the well-known domestic and pecuniary troubles from which he suffered in his declining years interfered with his success as a composer,—in fact, destroyed his happiness and his source of inspiration.

Sir Henry Bishop filled the professorial chair of music at Edinburgh for a short time, and also at Oxford from the death of Dr. Crotch, in 1848, to 1855. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1842; and it is asserted that he was at the time the only musician who ever received the distinction of knighthood in acknowledgment of his artistic merit from an English sovereign. But now, gramercy! in the year of grace eighteen hundred and eighty-eight, what number of musical and other knights can we not count? Verily, they are almost as plentiful as blackberries in autumn. In 1851, he was nominated chairman of the musical jury at the Great Exhibition; and it was at this time, by mere chance, that I first made his acquaintance. I was giving a per-

formance on Cavaillé-Coll's instrument—the first French organ brought to this country—when Sir Henry was passing; and he inquired who was playing. When he was told, and when I had been introduced to him, he kindly complimented me, and said he should be pleased to make my further acquaintance; and, as he was going to visit Leeds shortly, he hoped then to see me again.

Very soon after this he came to Leeds to deliver a series of lectures on his own career and works; and he repeated these at various institutions, both in London and in the provinces; but I am sorry to say, with no very great measure of success, pecuniary or otherwise. He was the guest of Sir Peter Fairbairn, who then lived at Woodsley House, afterwards converted into the vicarage of Leeds. Sir Peter twice asked me to meet his musical hero at dinner during Bishop's stay; so I had plenty of opportunity of observing his personal appearance, manner and conversation. He was a man of middle height, rather slim, with strongly marked features, an aquiline nose, and rather small bright brown eyes. His dress was that of an English gentleman "of the olden time"—a cut-away black coat, tight pants, and a huge white cravat and collar, which seemed to hold his head as in a pillory. He was certainly not a lively man; but somewhat reticent, quiet, and

slightly pompous during dinner. When, however, we went into Sir Peter's snuggerly "at after," as one of our deceased aldermen used to say, Sir Henry came out a little bit; and he told the following tale with much *naïveté*, believing that it would interest me as an organist, which of course it did. "Tom Cooke, one of our cleverest London musicians, and the composer of the popular glee, *Strike the Lyre*, has a fund of comical stories, which he tells most wittily; and no matter to what branch of the profession his hearers belong—organists, pianists, singers, or fiddlers—he has a suitable anecdote for all. Now Tom was not an organist—he probably knew less of the organ and of ecclesiastical music than of any other branch of his art; but, being on one occasion in company with a friend who was enthusiastic about everything connected with the 'king of instruments,' on which he was a great performer, Tom gave him the following story, for the truth and originality of which he vouched. A son of the Emerald Isle was engaged to blow an organ in a certain city. Being thoroughly unacquainted with the business, he having never seen an *organ brake* before, it was doubtless the guiding star of his destiny that led him to the spot, for

‘There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.’

The time having arrived to 'let the pealing organ blow,' the signal was given, but there was no wind. The signal was repeated twice, and even thrice, but still there was no wind. The delay was becoming awkward; the congregation were getting uneasy; what was to be done? 'Blow! Blow!! Blow!!!' issued simultaneously from half-a-dozen different mouths, but not the slightest zephyr stirred within the wind chest. The organist hastened to the blower's sanctum, when, lo! how sublime the spectacle that presented itself to his astonished vision! There hung the full-grown *protégé*, clinging with heels and hands to the long wooden handle of the bellows, his eyes starting from their sockets, and his cheeks distended and crimson with efforts to force his breath into the end of that long wooden handle!"

"Thank you, Sir Henry," I said; "I shall remember that capital organ-blowing story as long as I live."

On the next evening Sir Peter Fairbairn and I congratulated the composer on the lovely pieces which had been sung the previous night in illustration of his lecture. "Yes," Sir Henry said, "they were very nicely sung; and no doubt many of my pieces will be remembered when I am dead and gone; but, though I myself have obtained much popularity

and success, English music is still at a discount; and it is difficult to understand how and why it is that the works of our native composers obtain so small a space in the programmes of our public concerts. There is probably one chief reason—one which is not at all creditable to our nationality. There are few or none of our music-teachers who will give their pupils more English music than seems absolutely unavoidable. Whether this studied neglect betrays a morbid jealousy of their fellow countrymen, lest they should thereby advance the interest of a rival, and detract from their own,—or whether it is that numbers of our professors and concert-givers really labour under the delusion that there is no English music worthy of either private cultivation or public performance,—I will not venture to say. But what most of us in London know is, that for a number of years the most worthless foreign music has gained favour and acceptance in English musical circles, where excellent productions of our countrymen have been neglected and despised.”

“That is all quite true, Sir Henry; and will you permit me to add,” I said, “that it is a lamentable, though ludicrous fact, that many Englishmen have only cajoled John Bull into hearing their works—no matter what their merit—by producing them



SIR HENRY ROWLEY BISHOP.

From a photo by Walker and Boutall, 16, Clifford's Inn,
of an oil painting by unknown artist in National Portrait Gallery.

under foreign names, the more unpronounceable the more successful? Thus, our thoroughly English composer, John Hatton, whose name passes current throughout Europe as a sterling musician, first courted and won the public favour under the euphonious *nom de guerre* of 'Czapek.' Nay, instances are not rare in which the same music that was declared to be unspeakably stupid as the production of some plain John Smith, received universal applause when put forth as the *chef d'œuvre* of Signor Giovanni Smittinici!"

"You are quite right; and now, with Sir Peter's permission, we will go to the drawing-room. And you must play me some nice pieces of Bennett or of Wesley, so that we may know that these fine English musicians have something good to say for themselves."

After having played all I could remember of these two distinguished English composers, Sir Peter Fairbairn said, with his natural, pleasing northern accent, "Now, if ye'll just give us a wee bit of Scotch, *Ye Banks and Braes*, or *Auld Lang Syne*, I'll thank ye; and then believe you know something of real music."

And so the evening passed pleasantly along. I wished Sir Henry Bishop good-bye, and it was my last good-bye, for I never saw him again.

Bishop accomplished a most extraordinary act of memory, when the full score and the band parts of his first opera, *The Circassian Bride*, were destroyed by fire at Drury Lane theatre in the first week of its performance. He went home sadly; but with immense determination and industry he proceeded to re-write, and actually produced, another score, in the course of a few days, almost intact.

In his domestic life, he seems to have been most unfortunate. He was unhappy with his first wife, who is said not to have appreciated his genius; but soon after he married his second—*née* Anna Rivière, who became the celebrated singer, Madame Anna Bishop—then his troubles increased; and in 1839, seven years after their union, she eloped with Bochsa, the celebrated harpist, and travelled all over the world with him, giving concerts with great success, and captivating all her hearers. Bochsa died long ago, but Madame Bishop joined the majority only a year since.

Opinions differ respecting Bishop's right to be considered one of the founders of a school of English opera. But this is certain, that his operatic music is as eminently dramatic as that of many of the best Italian masters; and, while abounding in melody, it rarely fails to sustain the action or the feeling it is designed to express. Indeed, Bishop's

music is always full of animation. What a pretty tribute to the sweetness of his melody is the story of Rossini, who, meeting Bishop in Paris, and unable to recall his name, said, "You are Monsieur —," and then hummed the tune of *Home, Sweet Home!*

It is affirmed that the original melody of *Home, Sweet Home* is of Sicilian origin; but this is "not proven," as our good friends over the border say. He produced it originally at Covent Garden; it was sung by Madame Clari; and it took the audience and the public by storm at once, so that when the song was printed the publishers were unable for a long time to meet the enormous demand for copies. The melody is undoubtedly wedded to an effusion whose homely qualities and English truth have rendered it a household word among us; for when was *Home, Sweet Home*, ever uttered without awakening a thousand pleasant memories of the days of childhood, of loved ones now no more, of golden dreams of youth, of kindnesses which survived those who lavished them upon us—in a word, of love in all its purity and all its holy influences? We are told that the Swiss mountaineer in foreign lands pines when he hears the beloved *Ranz des vaches*, the cow-herd's strain of his native hills and crags; and the Highlander bounds like a red deer if he unex-

pectedly hears some favourite reel or strathspey of dear old Caledonia. So may we readily fancy and scarcely exaggerate the impression on the mind of the emigrant who finds the substitute for an English fireside at the delusive diggings, under a shabby tent that would scarcely shelter a dog, with a revolver for his companion in arms, and instead of a rosy-cheeked baby in the cradle, is employed the livelong day in rocking a cradle full of dirt;—fancy *him* hearing or singing *Home, Sweet Home*, and then imagine his feelings if you can!

There is not only great expression, but often intense musical feeling, in Bishop's music. To many persons, however, who affect what is now called the "ascetic" idea of art, *feeling* is stuff and affectation; beauty, they think, is a matter of line and rule, and *taste* a question of law and precedent, or an easy rule-of-three sum. As an example. A friend of mine, a sculptor, having executed the statue of a child in which the marble all but breathed, I was one day viewing the work with admiration; when another friend called, and I, in my enthusiasm, asked him what he thought of the *feeling* of the work. He went to the motionless yet speaking form of the child, and, placing his hand on it, artlessly replied, "Well, I think it *feels very damp!*"

Bishop's music bears the stamp of the national

character; it is music suited to cheer the fireside, music capable of being enjoyed by the humblest, while it commands the admiration of the highest and most enlightened in the community; music which, if it does not dazzle, rarely fails to delight.

When Sir Henry Bishop conducted the concerts and oratorios at Covent Garden Theatre, a famous organ builder of the same name (who told me the story many years ago), was employed to build an organ to be placed at the farthest end of the stage, and to be connected by a long tracker movement with the player at the keys in the orchestra. On the programmes it was stated that the new organ was completed; and then, in a separate line, came the announcement, "A long movement by Mr. Bishop." Of course the audience and the critics considered that this was a new work by the famous composer; and they were greatly chagrined and disappointed when they found that it was a long movement of mechanical work by the well-known organ builder of the same name, but no relation.

In concluding my sketch of Sir Henry Rowley Bishop, I cannot do better than quote from one of his biographers, who eloquently says:—

"The star of his genius illumined a notably dark period in native art; bringing back hope to the souls

of those who believed in the future of English music, in spite of gloomy surroundings. It is no exaggeration to say that, contemplating his works and their effects at this end of the half-century since he was at his best, his star was also the herald of a bright era in music, which has scarcely yet reached its noon-tide splendour."

VIII.

SIR W. STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

BENNETT was a Yorkshireman, and first saw the light at Sheffield, April 13th, 1816. Undoubtedly he was one of the few English musical composers, since Purcell's day, who attained a distinct style and individuality of his own, and whose works can be reckoned among the models or "classics" of the art. This is the opinion of all honest critics. His death in February, 1875, was a distinct and a serious loss to the music art world of Great Britain—and indeed of Europe; for his works were known and performed everywhere, or at least in those cities and other places where refined and expressive music was known and understood.

It is true, as one of his biographers says, that his genius had not that irresistible sweep and sway which compels the admiration even of the crowd, and which utters things that sink deep into the souls of men. He can hardly be reckoned among the great musical poets of the world, and it would be

both unwise and uncritical to claim that place for him. But what is wanting in power is almost made up, in regard to the artistic enjoyment to be derived from his works, by individuality and by finish. He was, in a special degree, a musician's composer. His excellences, in addition to the real and genuine feeling for beauty and expression which pervades his music, belong to that interesting and delicate type of art which illustrates in a special degree the fitness of means to an end, and the manner and medium of expressing it—a class of artistic production which always has a peculiar interest for artists, and for those who study critically the details of the art illustrated. No doubt this is all true enough; but Sterndale Bennett, as he is always familiarly called by musicians, accomplished great things, and established and sustained for himself a name, not only for refined, *original*, and beautiful pianoforte works, but also for vocal melody, as is evidenced by his *May Queen*, positively unsurpassed in the library of English musical productions.

The late learned, astute, and experienced music-critic of modern times, Mr. J. W. Davison, observed to me, many years ago, when I ventured to say that Bennett's music savoured too much of Mendelssohn: "My dear fellow, Mendelssohn owed something to Bennett; they played and worked together; and



SIR WILLIAM STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

their ideas and style became so intermingled, that you could really scarcely tell one from the other. There was the most friendly rivalry between the two; every day, during their Leipsic residence, one or the other brought new works to be played and criticised; and every day their friendship and admiration for each other grew stronger."

"Well," I replied, "that is an interesting statement; but Mendelssohn's music appeared before Bennett's; and, when the latter came out in print, numbers of musicians, my own master among the lot, said, 'Very nice, but Mendelssohn and water!'"

"Ah!" said Davison, "shallow, most shallow critics! Bennett is not only graceful, refined, melodious, and elegant, but absolutely *original*; and I challenge Sebastian Wesley or any other of Bennett's detractors to point out a single plagiarism on Mendelssohn's music. Now let us take the 'Barcarolle in F,' from one of his best concertos, which you and many other organists play so effectively on the instrument of your choice, and which is really one of the loveliest inspirations I am acquainted with; and just tell me if you can find anything of Mendelssohn's that it in the least resembles?"

Of course I could not, especially as I quite agreed with Davison.

In 1857, when the Leeds Town Hall (for the erec-

tion of which I had been one of the chief and most persistent advocates) was approaching completion, I ventured to suggest, through the medium of the local newspapers, that we should inaugurate the noble building, of which Mr. Brokerick was the genius-architect, with a musical festival; and that the gifted Yorkshireman, Sterndale Bennett, should be the first conductor. The following was a part of my initial letter :

“And now I wish most respectfully to ask our spirited mayor, the members of the corporation, and the inhabitants generally, whether they intend to have their magnificent Town Hall and organ opened with the enthusiasm and rejoicing which can alone find appropriate expression in a grand musical festival, on a scale worthy of the metropolis of the West Riding, of the commercial eminence of our town, and its taste and patronage of music? I believe it only needs initiation to enlist universal sympathy and co-operation; but the preparations should be commenced without delay, or it will be utterly impossible to assemble all the necessary elements of success. We must not trust to the ‘chapter of accidents’ for befriending us on such an occasion; we must be up and doing, with the zeal of

lovers of Divine music, and the promptitude and forethought of men of business.

"Although, in such a case, we can obviously command success by spirited and united action, I may remind my fellow townsmen that, with scarcely a single exception, all first musical festivals at the opening of large halls in this and other countries have been most successful from a pecuniary point of view. I do not therefore for a moment anticipate that one single farthing of the necessary guarantee fund will ever be required from those who may become subscribers.

"The Birmingham Hospital is almost entirely supported by the profits of the triennial musical festivals in that town. Surely Leeds can show herself equally able to aid similar noble charities through the agency of musical gatherings!

"Having obtained statistical information of the cost and expenditure of nearly all the great festivals in England, it will be my pride and delight as a townsman to place it at the disposal of any committee that may be appointed to take the matter into consideration. As a *professional* man I do not wish to undertake any work which may not be considered indispensable for the realization of the whole scheme.

"The Town Hall exists as an embodied answer

to the demand for means of doing justice to the musical taste earnestly craving gratification among all classes in Leeds; and, if these facts and suggestions help to accelerate action in the musical inauguration of this magnificent edifice and its noble organ, no one will rejoice more heartily than, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

“WM. SPARK.”

The mayor (Alderman Kitson) took the matter up with admirable spirit and earnestness; the result being a splendid musical festival, which commanded unbounded admiration from both the metropolitan and the local critics, as well as from the general public; and resulted in a profit of over two thousand pounds, which was divided among the Leeds charities.

Bennett took the greatest possible interest in the Leeds Festival of 1858; and no more lasting memorial of his genius exists than the beautiful cantata, or pastoral, *The May Queen*, for which Mr. Henry Chorley, the famous critic of the *Athenæum*, wrote the libretto.

At the first rehearsal of this now celebrated work, at Falkner's Rooms, in Greek Street, Leeds, I was so charmed with its originality, beauty, spontaneity, and melody, that I ventured to exclaim to my dear

old friend Henry Smart, who was present, "Well, this work seems to me to be worthy of a place with the most genial compositions of Haydn or Mozart!" And so it has turned out; for, among the numerous cantatas and oratorios which have been composed for and produced at the great English musical festivals since then, not one of them has ever obtained and kept the popularity of *The May Queen*. Its importance, therefore, especially to Leeds, as the *locale* of its first production, induces me to give a brief description of the work.

The persons represented are the Queen of England, the May Queen and her lover, and a noble disguised as Robin Hood. The Queen of the May, elated with her May-day dignity, teases her faithful swain by her indifference and by her semi-encouragement of the advances of the Greenwood King. An attempted kiss, on the part of the latter, arouses, very naturally, the ire of the true lover, who proceeds to a pugilistic punishment of the offender. A flourish of trumpets, and the queen appears amid "pageant music"; she soon arrives at the true state of matters, reproves the interloper for trifling with the affections of the May Queen, and commands the latter to wed her lover at morn. The chorus was very happily introduced, first singing in praise of May, then in praise of the May Queen, afterwards

in the "pageant music," and, finally, in the concluding piece, "A blessing on the bridal! A blessing on the queen!"

The first of these two are most striking: indeed, "Wake with a smile" is a most exquisite piece of writing in the truly rural style; the preservation of the tonic pedal through harmonious device and melodic abundance is wonderfully clear. The now well-known tuneful Maypole chorus, "With a laugh as we go round," was followed by a solo for the May Queen; the chorus resuming the burden, "Was never such a May Day," at the close of each verse. This delicious piece of writing was thoroughly appreciated, and enthusiastically encored. I may add that each of the persons represented, except the May Queen, had a solo. The lover (a tenor, of course) leads with a languishing and desponding air, "O meadow, clad in early green"; and, subsequently, Robin Hood has a very spirited song, "'Tis jolly to hunt in the bright moonlight." The second verse of this charming song made nearly every person in the hall turn round and look up at the balcony, where sat the mayor, Sir Peter Fairbairn:

"'Tis merry to spend in the broad, broad town,
Where the mayor snores loud o'er his cups of wine,
And the mercer to clothe us must needs roll down
His wool and his velvet so superfine."

The most charming simplicity pervades almost every *morceau* in the work; and at the same time there is no lack of novelty in harmony or ingenuity in construction. In short, *The May Queen* is a masterpiece which will last as long as music itself.

It may not be uninteresting here to mention, that the original principal singers in this lovely "Pastoral," as Bennett liked to call it, were the celebrated Madame Clara Novello, Miss Helena Walker (a favourite pupil of mine), Miss Palmer, Sims Reeves, and the inimitable Mr. Weiss, who sang gloriously the splendid music allotted to the character of Robin Hood. At the conclusion of the performance, Bennett was vociferously called for; and, on returning to the conductor's desk, he was greeted with loud and long acclamations. But, although it has been affirmed—and doubtless with much truth—that applause is the food of artists, I am quite sure, from many years' knowledge of him, that Sterndale Bennett "cared for none of these things." He was always shy and reticent, and so gentle and refined in his manners and conduct as to become a perfect model to the swarms of self-sufficient, arrogant "professors" who now unfortunately occupy prominent positions in the art world of music, without being in the least deserving thereof.

But, noble-minded and gifted as he was, it is only

admitting the bare truth when I say that he failed as a conductor. He did not possess the necessary qualifications; he would not stamp his foot, tap the desk with his *bâton*, or shout to offending performers to keep good time, and play or sing correctly. Distrusting his own power and knowledge, he consulted both Blagrove (the leader of the band) and myself, as to the *tempi* of many numbers in some of the most important works performed at the Festival. Every one, however, liked, nay, *loved* the man; it was therefore a foregone conclusion that whoever had the power to help him in this or any other way would readily and cheerfully do so.

One of the deep-toned Yorkshire bass singers said to his neighbour, after the first morning performance, "Sam, he don't lead us much; but wait till we have *Israel* (Handel's *Israel in Egypt*) on Friday morning; and, when we sing the chorus, 'He led them through the deep,' we'll *lead him!*" And verily they did; for Bennett tried in vain to keep them back from hurrying the time, and from singing with too much earnestness and impetuosity. On that memorable occasion I played Mendelssohn's organ part—the whole performance, with the trifling exception alluded to, being admirable and most successful. "Everything else," says a critic of the day, "was magnificent. The 'Hailstone' chorus was

literally appalling, and the excitement of the audience at its conclusion was something extraordinary. A perfect shout and cheer broke from the assembly; and the repetition of the chorus was inevitable, notwithstanding the earnest request of the committee that "no audible expression of applause should interrupt the performance of the oratorios."

It was at this first Leeds Musical Festival that the now well-known story of the double-bass player first became public property. Bennett asked that all the band, excepting the principals, would not play in the *Messiah* chorus, "Lift up your heads," until the full chorus was reached, "He is the King of glory." An enthusiastic old Handelian, who was playing the double-bass, and his son, the 'cello, hearing this request by the conductor, said, "Didst hear that, Jim? Give us the resin"; and, after satisfying the bow and himself by repeated rubbings and many significant snorts, he said earnestly and emphatically to his son, "Now, look out, Jim; I'll show him *who* is the King of glory!" Verily, when the familiar passage was reached, the vigorous raspings of that double-bass, and that violoncello, were absolutely unparalleled in the history of bowing and scraping.

That double-bass player came from Halifax. He told me that, when Handel's oratorio *Joshua* was

first performed there, the people wondered and speculated as to who or what was "Joshua"; but, before the concert commenced, my friend appeared in the orchestra, carrying his huge catgut instrument, and all the people with one accord stood up and shouted out, "There he is! that's Joshua!"

As a single instance, out of many I could chronicle, of Bennett's kindly feeling and consideration, I may mention, as I do most gratefully, that he not only suggested to the Festival Committee the composition and performance of an organ piece by myself, but urged it so well and strongly that I could not do otherwise than comply; and I produced my *Sonata in D minor*, the performance and publication of which helped me most materially in my professional career. I may here say that Sir Michael Costa was equally keen-sighted (*abnormis sapiens*) in the arrangement of the programme for subsequent Festivals.

Sterndale Bennett did not give the world more than about fifty publications; comprising piano-forte concertos, studies, rondos, chamber trios, songs, cantatas, the *Woman of Samaria* (oratorio), fugitive pieces, etc.; but everything he did was marked by great finish and perfection of form and detail, and by a peculiarly refined perception, and a total absence of commonplace or vulgarity.

Speaking of the *Woman of Samaria*, in which occurs the beautiful popular unaccompanied quartet, "God is a Spirit," one of his biographers says, very correctly, that "it is less spontaneous in character than *The May Queen*, and in style and treatment does not appeal to the popular mind; but it will always be delightful to musicians, and to those who hear considerately and critically." The man and his music were one—indissoluble. His pianoforte playing was not only mathematically accurate, but piquant and highly expressive. What could we wish for more?

In concluding this sketch I will give an anecdote, from my "Life of Henry Smart," of which Sir Sterndale Bennett was immediately cognisant, and which I have quoted elsewhere in my honest endeavour to bring into contempt imperfect performances of Gregorian or barbarian music:—

"In 1857-8, during the erection of the Town Hall organ, Smart was a frequent visitor to Leeds; he had then good health and spirits; could see tolerably well; in fact, he could see much further than many other folks whose visual organs were stronger than his own—I mean intellectually and metaphorically. In the week of the first Musical Festival, there were plenty of dinner parties, etc., going on;

and I need scarcely say that Smart was a welcome guest whenever we could spare time to accept the numerous invitations we received as soon as he had got fairly installed in my domicile in Park Square, where I then resided. Wishful that we should have at least one gathering at home worthy of the event we were celebrating, I invited to dinner, on the third Festival day, the best people I could get together, including Professor Sterndale Eennett and his wife, the town clerk (Mr. Ikin), Mr. and Mrs. Dibb, several clergymen, and others. It so happened that, on receiving from one of the expected guests an excuse at the last moment, I met a young and ardent 'Puseyite curate' (as they were then called); and, as he expressed a strong wish to meet Mr. Smart, I asked asked him if he would supply the vacant place at table. This turned out to be a most unfortunate mistake, for I had not only forgotten for the moment Smart's old antipathy to Ritualism and Gregorianism in almost every shape and form; but I actually placed him next to the bold young cleric, who, with a great deal of self-importance and pertinacity, insisted on contradicting Mr. Smart respecting the rightful position, value, and use of Gregorian chants in the services of the Church of England. The guests, who were rather quiet and stiff during the early part of the dinner, heard the storm brew-

ing; and, when the curate folded his hands spirally, saying to the distinguished organist, in rather a loud tone of voice, 'I am strongly of opinion, Mr. Smart, that there is a fine ecclesiastical, devotional character with Gregorian tones, which no other music possesses, and therefore I go in warmly for that kind of thing,' poor Smart lost his temper entirely. It was more than he could stand any longer. So he pushed his chair back half a yard, pulled his fine, stalwart frame together, and, with a significant dramatic gesture, said: 'Now, look here! this won't do; who asked *your* opinion, sir, upon a musical question of which you evidently know absolutely *nothing*? You may rely on it, that some day, when you and your friends are shouting those ugly Gregorian chants, Heaven will punish you, and *rain down bags of crotchets upon your heads*, and prevent you from ever singing them again!'"

IX.

SIR JOHN GOSS.

AS in the case of almost all the eminent musicians I have had the honour to be personally acquainted with, Sir John Goss began his career as a chorister. At the age of eleven he became one of the children of the Chapel Royal, under that well known glee-writer, John Stafford Smith. His father, Joseph Goss, was organist at Fareham, Hants, where he was regarded with much respect and admiration, being possessed of considerable talents as an organist. No doubt therefore that as his father and grandfather were both musicians, the art with him was "native and to the manner born." No doubt also that his early associations with the solid, beautiful works of the best English ecclesiastical composers, in the performance of which he daily took part, stamped upon his youthful mind those impressions which in after life helped him to enrich so nobly from his own pen the literature of Church music.

He used often to tell at our annual meetings of old chorister boys amusing stories of his education

at the Chapel Royal. Before alluding further to one of these gatherings of "old boys," when Goss, having become famous, was, of course, the chairman at our dinner, I may here quote from a notice of him by one of his oldest friends, who says :

"The education of chorister boys in those days, even within the shadow of the palace of St. James, was of a most happy-go-lucky description. On two days in each week a parochial schoolmaster attended the house in Adelphi Terrace where the boys lived, and gave them an hour and a half's instruction. These days were appropriately termed 'slate days,' because the rudiments of arithmetic occupied the greater part of the time. This constituted for a considerable period the only training *in literis humanioribus* of the young gentlemen of his Majesty's Chapel Royal. Nor does it seem that musical instruction, outside the usual routine work of learning necessary anthems and services, was more liberally bestowed; for on one occasion the youngster John-Goss bought out of his hardly saved pocket money a copy of a set of Handel's organ concertos (Walsh's celebrated two-stave edition). Whilst walking across the schoolroom one day, with the book under his arm, he met his music-master, who said, 'What have you got under your arm?' 'If

you please, sir,' replied little Goss, trembling, 'it's only Handel's organ concertos, and I thought I should like to learn to play them.' 'Oh! only Handel's concertos,' replied the master; 'and pray, sir, did you come here to *play* or to *sing*?' 'To sing, sir,' said Goss, utterly discomfited. The master then seized the book, and crowned his argument by hitting the boy on the head with it. Poor Goss never again saw his beloved book."

I may here relate another anecdote in connection with the musical education of the "Royal choristers," which Dr. Edward Hopkins told with much humour, after one of the old boys' dinners, to Sir John Goss, Cooper, myself, and other organists who were grouped around him. "Old H——, who was our music-master at the time I am alluding to, knowing that some of the elder boys were showing considerable ability for organ playing, one evening, in a fit of generosity, took a few of us into his private room, where stood the little old organ, to which there was attached the low octave of pedal 'pull-downs.' 'Now, boys,' he began rather pompously, 'as several of you will probably have soon to play a church service, I wish to show you how to give out the hymn tunes properly, to play an extemporaneous introduction, and also appropriate unpremeditated inter-



SIR JOHN GOSS.

From a photo by Elliott & Fry, 55, Baker Street, W.

ludes.' He began with a few rambling 'hunchback' chords by way of a prelude, 'gave out' old St. Ann's tune, and then proceeded to improvise an 'appropriate' interlude. Before he had gone far the boys perceived that he was inextricably caught in a trap of his own making—that he had modulated far out of the key, and couldn't get back again! So, as old H—— saw this, he suddenly jumped off the organ stool, and, saying quickly, 'And so on, boys,' he bolted out of the room, leaving the young music students, his pupils, to find out as they best could the solution of his very original modulations. After that remarkable incident, whenever a difficulty arose about lessons that couldn't well be mastered or finished, the boys always used to whisper to each other, 'And so on!'"

Recurring to another of these pleasant old Cathedral chorister boys' meetings, which was held first at a special morning service in Westminster Abbey (the late amiable organist, Mr. Turle, presiding at the organ), and secondly, by adjournment "from labour to refreshment," at the Crystal Palace, where Sir John Goss presided at the banquet, I was that day the subject of a most curious incident, which, when made known, made the "old boys" positively scream with laughter.

After leaving the Abbey, I joined a venerable,

pleasant-looking old gentleman, dressed in clerical garb, and with a considerable amount of white choker, whom I had seen in the choir; and I unfortunately jumped to the conclusion that he was either one of the minor canons or the precentor, whose name I did not then know. He said cheerily to me, "If you like, we will keep together until we get to the palace, for I want to have some conversation with you about organists and about music generally."

"With all my heart," I said; and on we went, first by a boat to London Bridge, and thence by train to Sydenham, holding "pleasant converse" all the way.

At last my friend observed, "What is the meaning of all this writing and talking about the worn out, incompetent cathedral organists, and who do you think they are?"

"Well," I replied, "I'm told by Smart and other fine players that old Dr. B——, of —— Cathedral, is about the biggest muff out as an organist; though they always add that he turns out very clever pupils, and is an excellent teacher."

"Ah! indeed," said *his reverence*, as I still deemed him, "that is their opinion; and what else may Smart have said about 'old B,' as he calls him?"

"He made me roar with laughter one day," I replied, "by showing me how he had heard him play over, or 'give out,' prior to the singing of the

Venite Exultemus, Mornington's popular chant in E on the cathedral organ, starting with arpeggios from the bass to the treble note, and twisting and turning and shaking to the very end! What an awful old fool he must be!" I added.

"Indeed," he said; "but here we are at the palace, and we had better now join the old boys."

As soon as I got to the dressing-room, and met several of my old chums, I immediately asked them who the nice old gentleman was I had been with on our way down, and with whom I had had a very pleasant conversation.

"Why, surely," said Hopkins, "you know who he is; that's Dr. B——, of ——."

Well, gentle reader, you could, as the old saying is, have "knocked me down with a feather."

"Who? What?" I roared out; "Dr. B——! O merciful Providence, what have I done?" And then I told them how I had castigated him as a player, on Smart's information. However, when they had finished laughing at my unlucky mishap, one of the old boys came up to me and said,—

"Don't distress yourself about it, and don't sit far from him at the dinner; he is reported to be the greatest diplomatist in our profession."

And so it turned out, for old B—— had a toast entrusted to him, and he somehow managed to lug

in my name, and flatter me about my anthems and general writings! Could tact and diplomacy have gone further than *that*?

It was in 1824, after Goss had studied unremittingly with Thomas Attwood,—then organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, and formerly a favourite pupil of Mozart,—that he was appointed organist of St. Luke's, Chelsea; and in 1838 he succeeded Attwood as the metropolitan organist. When William Knyvett, the famous alto singer, died in 1856, Goss was appointed one of the composers to the Chapel Royal. It was at this time that, notwithstanding that his many previous works were chiefly secular—overtures for the Philharmonic Society, glees, etc.—he began to produce those beautiful anthems and that canticle music which will undoubtedly hand his name down from generation to generation.

A few of these can only be mentioned out of nearly forty. There are two anthems which certainly seem to be universally regarded as the prime favourites, and these are, *If we believe that Jesus died*, and *O Saviour of the World*. Of the former, one who was present at the rehearsal of that noble anthem, composed for the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, says: "I well remember the scene when the work was rehearsed by a large and fine choir in the music-room, Store Street. When the last few

bars, *pianissimo*, had died away, there was a profound silence for some time, so deeply had the hearts of all been touched by its truly devotional spirit. Then there gradually arose on all sides the warmest congratulation to the composer; it could hardly be termed applause, for it was something much more genuine and respectful." Of the latter, *O Saviour of the World*, it is not too much to say that, considering its modest pretensions, it is the most natural, purely written, and impressive anthem in the whole range of musical literature. For depth of expression it has been not inaptly compared to the last vocal production of Mozart, the lovely motet, *Ave Verum*.

The man was like his music—religious, true, honest, natural, fervent, and amiable; and "it is not less true in music than in any other art, 'that the artist writes his character in his music.'"

When I was quite a young organist, he kindly permitted me on several occasions to sit with him during Divine service, and I was always greatly impressed with his devotion and his attention to his duties. The Lord's prayer, the confession, and the creeds he invariably repeated with the choir, and thus set a good example in his day and generation, the seeds of which were sown deep, and are now producing good fruit, especially in the metropolis.

I quite agree with one of his warmest friends and admirers, that it is difficult to pass an opinion on Goss as an organist. The instruments of his youth were very different from those of the present time; and if he was not a brilliant performer, from a modern point of view, it is equally certain that many of our young organists would be utterly unable to produce the fine effects which Goss obtained on an organ having two octaves of clumsy pedals, a gamut G swell, a sixteen-feet (C C C) great organ manual, and two or three obstreperous composition pedals. He always accompanied the voices (especially in solos) with great taste; and his extempore voluntaries, in introducing the anthem, were generally models of grace and sweetness. This I believe to be a correct and just view of his powers as an organist; and his critical knowledge of organ playing by others was of the highest order, and his honest judgment could always be thoroughly relied on. He was therefore frequently asked to act as umpire at competitions for organist's appointments, and, as a rule, his judgment was accepted *nemine dissente*. When there was a hubbub about the appointment of the talented Miss Tasker as organist of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, and she was hardly used by some of the officials, Goss generously came to the rescue, and in the following quiet, character-

istic letter succeeded in turning the tide in the lady's favour :

" 3, CHEYNE WALK,

" *11th April*, 1859.

" TO MR. ROBERT HACK.

" SIR,

" As I think very highly of Miss Tasker's musical abilities, I regret to be unable to give her a testimonial for publication. I now act upon the invariable rule of declining to give recommendations, except for cathedral purposes. In reply to your inquiry, however, I cannot object to state my opinion that Miss Tasker is not merely competent, but able to perform the duties of parochial organist well. Her musical talents generally I need not speak of ; her holding a King's Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music assures you that they must be first-rate.

" I am, sir, your very obedient servant,

" JOHN GOSS."

In June, 1860, Goss was chosen, in conjunction with Mr. Best, the eminent Liverpool organist, and Mr. George Cooper, deputy-organist at St. Paul's, etc., to act as one of the judges at the competition which took place in the Town Hall, Leeds, for the appointment of organist to the corporation at a

salary of £200 per annum. There was great excitement in connection with this contest, and special care was taken to insure secrecy in all the arrangements. There were 22 candidates, and these were reduced to the following seven: Mr. James Broughton, of Leeds; Mr. G. Hepworth, of Mecklenburg Schwerin; Mr. Taylor, of Gloucester; Mr. Oldham, of Hythe; Mr. Walter Parratt, of Huddersfield; Mr. Hilton, of Manchester; and Mr. William Spark, of Leeds.

The following were the judges' instructions sent to each of the seven competing candidates:

"1. An organ composition, by one of the great masters, to be played by each candidate. (The selection left to the player.)

2. A dramatic overture. (The selection left to the player.)

3. An organ composition to be played at first sight.

4. An extempore performance on the organ, of about five minutes' duration, in any key that the judges may appoint.

5. A short piece of music in vocal score to be read at sight.

6. Each candidate to send in a manuscript copy of his own organ part to Handel's chorus, 'Glory

to God,' from the *Messiah*, which he would consider proper to use on the complete performance of the work by the orchestra, chorus, and organ.

The musical manuscript must not be in the candidate's own writing, and ought to contain written directions as to the particular organ stops, or registers, to be employed. The copies to be addressed to the Town Hall Committee, and sent on or before June 25th.

The examination will commence on Tuesday morning, June 25th, at nine o'clock precisely. The candidates will not be allowed any assistance in turning over the pages of their music, nor in the management of the organ stops."

Of course each candidate was allowed previous access to and practice on the organ. After the entrance of the judges, who were screened off from the organ and the players, the candidates drew lots as to their order of playing, and it so happened that I was to be the last of the seven to play; so I had to wait about all day, and that too in a state of nervous excitement, feeling as if I was going to be executed myself, rather than going in for execution in another way. The corporation met some days afterwards; and when the town clerk had broken the seal of the packet, it was found that the

candidate who drew the letter "G," and played last, was recommended by the judges for the appointment. I need not add that I was shortly installed as organist, in the appointment in which Sir John Goss took such a prominent part.

Both Goss and the talented organist of the Chapel Royal, Mr. Cooper, as well as Mr. Best, who was one of the finest organ players in Europe, have gone to their rest.

On the anniversary of the death of Sir John Goss a large number of distinguished organists and composers, with Lady Goss and numerous friends of the family, assembled in St. Paul's Cathedral for the purpose of unveiling the beautiful monument to his memory, which had been subscribed for, to the amount of £330 18s., by admirers of his genius in almost every part of the English-speaking world.

It is rather painful to give here an extract from the report of the executive committee, of which Sir Arthur Sullivan, one of Goss's justly favourite pupils was the chairman; but it is only due to the thousands of the composer's admirers that the facts stated should be made known as widely as possible. This is the excerpt:

"Some difficulty has been experienced in carrying out the project, and it is felt desirable to state why the delay has taken place. An address, signed by

peers, bishops, deans of cathedrals and other clergymen, members of Parliament, the professors of music at our universities, organists, and numerous musicians, was presented to the dean and chapter in the early part of 1884. In this were set forth the various resolutions passed at the public meeting of the previous October. The memorialists, in asking the capitular authorities to assign a place *on the walls of the cathedral* for a monument to Sir John Goss, respectfully reminded them that he was, not only organist of St. Paul's, but also a distinguished composer of church music which has found acceptance in all English-speaking lands. In reply to this address, the dean was good enough to inform the deputation of your committee who waited on him, that permission would be given to erect a memorial, but that it must be placed in the crypt, and not on the walls of the cathedral, as had been requested. About this time a general scheme for the decoration of the edifice was under public discussion. It was hoped that, when the design for this was settled, a monument in consonance with it might be approved by the chapter, and permission given to place it on the walls. The committee, therefore, while thanking the dean, asked that the question as to its position should be deferred for the time. No further action was taken until April, 1885, when, finding no

definite plan for the decoration of the interior of the cathedral had been matured, or was likely to be immediately undertaken, it was determined to proceed with the erection of the monument in the crypt. Eleven designs from various firms were sent in for consideration. The committee gave the preference to a classic design of alabaster, varied with white and black marbles, by Mr. John Belcher, Fellow of the Institute of British Architects—Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, Associate of the Royal Academy of Arts, undertaking to carve a marble panel, representing choristers singing. A cast of the work was shown at the exhibition of the Royal Academy. Since the monument has been finished it has met with much approval, and is deemed an artistic success."

Prior to the ceremony of unveiling the monument, which is fixed on a pier in the crypt, facing one of the south windows, the following special music from the works of Sir John Goss was beautifully given by the choir, under the direction of Dr. Stainer, the organist: Psalms for the Day, Chants in E and A flat, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, service in E, anthem, *Praise ye the Lord*.

And thus closed an act of duty and affection on the part of his pupils, friends, and admirers, which

will ever be cherished in the memories of those who were privileged to be present. In concluding my sketch of this truly good man and great Church composer, I will quote an eloquent tribute to his worth from the pen of one, who exclaimed with Hamlet when he left us, "Alas! I knew him well!"

"A careful study and familiar knowledge of the sacred compositions of Goss leaves a very definite feeling that their author was a man of refined thought, religious in life, possessing a keen appreciation of the resources of his art, tempered by a firm resolution to use them only in a legitimate manner. There is that gentleness and repose about them which eminently characterized the man himself. His disposition was tender and sweet; an unkindness or a rough word did not rouse, it *wounded* him. He treated all others with consideration and goodness, and seemed hurt when he had occasion to realize the fact that others did not always treat him in the same way. He loved quietness, and valued the affection of others. He has now reached the haven where life's short and cruel storms can no more threaten him. For him we feel that the oft-chanted prayer, 'May he rest in peace,' is hardly needful; we can say, in faith and loving remembrance, 'He is in peace.'"

X.

MICHAEL WILLIAM BALFE.

"I DREAMT that I dwelt in marble halls," "When other lips and other hearts," "The light of other days," "Good-night, beloved," "We may be happy yet," and a hundred other melodies as pure and beautiful as the heavenly spring from which they flowed, testify to Balfe's undying popularity, and to the musical power which was born with him.

With very few exceptions, the English opera was represented for upwards of twenty-five years by Michael William Balfe; and the list of his large, complete operas, independently of numerous other works, actually numbers twenty-seven, including the first he produced in London, that beautiful work *The Siege of Rochelle*, *The Maid of Artois*, *Catherine Grey*, *Falstaff*, *The Bohemian Girl*, *The Enchantress*, *The Rose of Castille*, *Satanella*, *The Puritan's Daughter*, besides the Italian operas he composed for Palermo in 1829, for Pavia in 1830, and for Milan in 1831.

To this remarkable enumeration, says one of his chroniclers, exhibiting proof of an amount of labour, a fertility of resource, and a degree of industry seldom paralleled, must be added his cantata the *Sleeping Queen*; innumerable minor compositions, songs, ballads, romances, duets, many of which have attained great and deserved popularity; his edition of Moore's Melodies published in 1859 with new symphonies of his own composition (a work he was so eminently qualified to accomplish), witness his beautiful love song, *They tell me thou'rt the favourite guest*, breathing the very spirit of the Irish melodies, together with the lost *Atala*, and a mass of work left unfinished in his portfolio, some of which may yet doubtless see the light. All these productions were written with great quickness and spontaneity; indeed it has been charged against Balfe that he was too ready, and too rapid in his work to attain that finish and scholarship which have always been considered necessary to secure lasting fame, as well as the admiration of musicians and connoisseurs.

Balfe, it is known, cared but little for the dicta of the scholars and big-wigs; he wrote what came at the moment to his mind; he drew his inspiration at an ever-welling fount of melody, a spring that was perennially fresh and sparkling. There is a very

good illustration of this. Our composer was applied to by a young musician for lessons in harmony and composition; and, having been told that he had already gone through Albrechtberger's and Cherubini's works on counterpoint and fugue, Balfe very candidly said to his intended pupil, "Then ye had better go to some one else, for I am blest if ye don't understand much more already of such matter than I could possibly teach you in a century!"

Balfe was born in Dublin in 1808, and died at Rowney Abbey in 1870. Like Mozart, Mendelssohn, and other great composers, he was a musician from his infancy. His father taught him the violin at five years of age; and, before the urchin tyro was seven, he had composed and scored for the band of his second master (Mr. Meadows) a polacca which was duly performed, the executants being most unwilling to believe and to acknowledge from whose infant hands the piece had come. Balfe's father, perceiving that the boy possessed genius of a high order, placed him under the tuition of Rooke, of Dublin; who produced the young Michael William, at eight years of age, at a concert in the Royal Exchange, where he performed on the violin a little-known concerto by Mayseder, thus affording a remarkable proof of his precocious talent and his wonderful executive ability. As was said of Haydn,



MICHAEL WILLIAM BALFE.

From a photo by H. N. King, Bath.

when he was a chorister, and sang so sweetly in St. Stephen's Church, Vienna, "his youthful days were absorbed in music, he lived in an atmosphere of melody and harmony which filled his whole soul with delight, and he became the happiest of mortals."

How truly it has been said that "music is the art of youth!" The true musician ought already as a boy to have charmed the public, and obtained both applause and encouragement. If his labours have not secured him patronage in his youthful days; if it is only in his riper years that he enters upon the paths of science; it may be pronounced almost impossible that he should ever attain to true greatness in his profession. If he begins later in life, his very acquaintance with those great masters who have already secured immortality will prevent his finding any true relish in his own labours, or having the necessary confidence in his own talents. He will know too well the value of the plaudits of the public to covet them too greedily. He will feel the want of that spur of youthful ambition which stimulates to the most daring attempts, and impels the mind to reach the heights of art. He may make money; he may write as well as those who have studied hard: but he will never become a great master. Did Purcell, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn,

begin late in life to study to be proficient in their sublime, ethereal art? No; like Balfe, "they were musicians from the very cradle."

In after life—probably in 1843—when Balfe had become a celebrity, and first went on a concert tour, I had the good fortune to be introduced to the composer of the *Bohemian Girl*; and, young as I was, I regarded with considerable admiration the man who had written such lovely melodies.

In 1845, Balfe became conductor of Her Majesty's theatre, then under the management of the famous Mr. Lumley. I had several opportunities, through the kindness and courtesy of mutual friends, of seeing and talking with him; and a more "cheery companion," so full of life, animated intelligent conversation, and racy anecdotes, I have rarely met with. One night he told us a postprandial story (about a former master of his in Dublin, to whom I have already alluded, Mr. O'Rourke—or Rooke, as he afterwards called himself—who wrote the charming opera, *Amilie, or the Love Test*) which produced great laughter and merriment from the company present.

"Rooke," said Balfe, "was a tall, powerful native of my own dear old Ireland, and in every respect one of whom the Emerald Isle might be proud. Happening to live in a house where another inmate

was very short of stature, and very much embarrassed in circumstances, the establishment was visited one morning by sheriff's officers in quest of Rooke's small-sized fellow lodger. The little man happened, at the moment when they knocked at the door, to be about leaving the house to escape the 'captivating' visitors he now encountered. But when they asked if he was Mr. Short, of whom they were in quest, he promptly replied, 'No, he is not up yet; but you will find him in the right-hand room on the second floor.'

"They thanked him and ascended the stairs, and *he* found it good for his health to leave so dangerous a locality as rapidly as possible. The officers mounted to the second floor, and deemed themselves lucky to have found Mr. Short (as they supposed) in a pleasant slumber. They were not so rude as to draw the curtains, for they did not apprehend that, little as he was, he would escape through the key-hole; so they civilly mentioned their errand, and requested their presumed captive to complete his toilet as quickly as practicable.

"Rooke told them that they had come to the wrong room, and desired them to vacate his apartment; to which the officers replied that he must not attempt to catch old birds with chaff. The composer now grew wroth, and said he would kick them down-

stairs, a threat which excited their mirth rather than their fears.

"At last Rooke got so exasperated that he leapt out of bed; but when, instead of a man of five feet and a trifle, they were confronted with a stalwart fellow over six feet high, they saw their mistake, and descended the stairs without the acceleration Rooke proposed."

Before Balfe became famous as a composer, he made a great success as a baritone singer in Italy, and Germany; but it was in Paris, at that time regarded as the supreme judge and distributor of fame, particularly in matters musical, that he scored a great success by his impersonation of the difficult character of Figaro in Rossini's unique opera *Il Barbière*. His success was so great that Laurent, the manager of the Italiens, offered him, after the third night, through the mouthpiece of Rossini, an engagement for three years, on the very acceptable terms of 15,000f. for the first, 20,000f. for the second, and 25,000f. for the third year. He sang and acted as a comparatively young man in company with the greatest Italian artistes of the day, Sontag, Malibran, Graziani, Donzelli, etc. Rossini entertained the highest opinion of Balfe's skill as a composer; and he recommended him to compose a required overture, two choruses, and a scena for

Malibran, etc., for interpolation in Zingarelli's *Romeo è Giuletta*, the success of which when performed at the Grand Opera in Paris was very great.

There can be no doubt that Balfe's knowledge of vocalization, and his powers as a singer, helped him greatly to write in that melodious, mellifluous style which marks him as one of the sweetest melodists of the age. We may rely on it that, as a rule, composers and performers who have been singers in their youth, and can sing as they write or play when they become adults, are not only the nicest and the best musicians to "give ear to," but invariably display taste, feeling, expression, and qualities of heart and head, *not* so often found in those who do not and cannot sing. The greatest musicians I have ever read of, or those whom I have known personally "in the flesh," as one of my friendly critics observes, were all singers; and I think it may be accepted as a safe aphorism that, in the number of musical works which are daily and almost hourly "thrown at our heads" by the would-be composers of the age, those which have the least melody in them, and are purely the result of persevering, mechanical labour, are generally the productions of non-vocalists, those who have neither melody in their hearts nor tenderness in their souls.

What did Haydn say when he was reputed to have performed miracles, and was once asked how he worked them?

"Let your air or melody," he replied, "be good, and your composition, whatever it be, will be so likewise, and will assuredly delight. It is the soul of music, the life, the spirit, the essence of a composition; without it theorists may succeed in discovering and using the most singular chords and combinations, but nothing is heard after all but a laboured sound, which, though it may not vex the ear, leaves the head empty and the heart cold and unaffected by it."

In 1841 Balfe attempted, with the most praiseworthy motives, to establish a National Opera, and this notwithstanding John Barnett's failure in a similar effort the year before. He had married a pretty German opera singer of great ability and reputation, and he desired that she should take the heroine's part in his last production, *Keolanthe*. This Madame Balfe did to perfection, and she (as well as the other performers associated with her—Wilson, Henry Phillips, Miss Gould, etc.) was lauded and congratulated by the united metropolitan press and the opera-goers. *Keolanthe* was a decided success; and yet in two months' time the

theatre was closed, and the whole of Balfe's National Opera scheme, that had looked so promising and hopeful at the outset, fell to the ground.

Balfe's "dying speech" to the audience, or "funeral oration" over his attempted instauration of a National English Opera, must not here be omitted, as it is certainly instructive, if not amusing:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—About two hours ago I received a note from Mr. John Barnett, of whom Miss Gould is a pupil, stating that he could not allow her to appear at this theatre any longer. She being the third who has left this establishment, I am really unable at this moment to substitute anything for 'Il Paddy Whack,' as 'Marcelline' cannot be played, neither Mr. Harris nor Mr. Selby being in the house. Had I known of this sooner, I could have put something over the bills to prevent you coming; but if you will wait five or ten minutes, perhaps Mr. Harris will arrive. This is the last night of the English Opera House, or at least of it under my reign. (Cries of 'No!') The fact is, there are not sufficient funds in the house, and I am already burdened with five or six hundred pounds debt through it. I have done all in my power for the establishment. I brought out my opera, *Keo-*

lanthe, gratis, for which Madame Vestris offered me 300 guineas if I would have brought it out at her theatre. I had another opera of Mr. Macfarren's ready cast and studied, but I was not able to produce it in consequence of the secession of Mr. Phillips. (Cries of 'Shame!') I am exceedingly sorry I ever was such a fool as to become a manager of an English theatre. In that capacity I will never appear again before you—in future only as a composer."

And he kept his word; for Balfe felt that neither he nor any other composer was the right man in the right place as the manager of a theatre.

After this Balfe went to Paris, where he secured further successes, both as a composer and as a vocalist; but he soon returned to England, and in 1843, in conjunction with "the poet Bunn," the manager of Drury Lane theatre, he produced his now universally popular opera, the *Bohemian Girl*. Miss Romer was the original Arline, Mr. Harrison, Thaddeus; Miss Betts, the Gipsy Queen; Stretton, Devilshoof; and Borrani and Durnset made up the list of the *dramatis personæ*. Nothing has ever exceeded the favour with which this opera was received throughout the musical world. The airs were "ground" out upon every organ that had a handle; and, as was well observed by one of his biographers,

"The heart bowed down with weight of woe," "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls," and "When other lips and other hearts," beat upon the ear night and day like the waves of the restless ocean, till, as the natural penalty, the nemesis of success, the wearied listener wished the buoyant Arion at the bottom of the sea. On the occasion of the one hundredth representation of the opera, Balfe was presented on the stage of Drury Lane theatre with a handsome silver tea service; and when some one observed that it seemed odd to present an Irishman with a tea service, Gilbert A'Beckett replied he supposed it was in allusion to the *Bohea-mian Girl*.

Balfe continued his conductorship at Her Majesty's with masterly ability until 1852, for seven years; during which time Jenny Lind, the Swedish nightingale, was the bright particular star that attracted all musical London to hear her, sometimes at fabulous prices. During this period she took a concert tour, and Balfe was her conductor and pianist. It was after one of these concerts, when he played all the accompaniments from memory, that I had another opportunity of having a long chat with this genial musician, and a very merry night we had. Weiss, that thoroughly good man and splendid vocalist—Willoughby Weiss, whom I afterwards knew intimately up to the time of his

death,—was with us; and it is only stating the truth when I say that we had “a jolly time,” and that the fun often grew “fast and furious.” Weiss told us that, although he was born in Liverpool, his father was a German; and that the pronunciation of his name often became somewhat unfortunate in English hands, for it was twisted and twined into all sorts and shapes; some would pronounce it *Weese*, others *Wiss*, or *Wase*; and few seemed to know or remember that in German the *W* is pronounced as *V*, and the *E* and *I* always as *I*, and that the right pronunciation was of course *Vice*—the only vice I feel sure which is connected with the always welcome and ever-popular bass singer.

Balfe gave us many stories of Irish carmen, one of which I well remember, and is worth recording. “Of course,” said Balfe, “the Irish are as proud of their Moore as the Scotch are of Burns, but I must say that I scarcely think it fair that either one or the other should claim both. I remember an amusing instance while in Dublin a few months ago, and one which adds another to the many—too many—known instances of the extreme gullibility of a certain class of my countrymen.

“I was riding behind one of those original characters, Irish carmen, who invariably become com-

municative, sometimes rather more so than is required.

“‘Pat,’ said I, ‘I have just come from Scotland, where they tell you some mighty fine stories about their great men.’

“‘Surely,’ Pat added quickly, ‘they are not equal to ould Oirland’s great heroes; and, sor, they havn’t one to touch the moighty Duke of Wellington and Dan O’Connell, who was as fine a preacher as ever stepped out of his shoes; and then, sor, there was Tommy Moore, the great poet.’

“‘Pat,’ I said, ‘there I am with you, my boy, for I’ve the greatest respect and admiration for Moore.’

“He then gave his whip a sharp crack, and, feeling increased confidence from the interest I appeared to take in the information he had already given me, he added, with great enthusiasm and emphasis—

“‘And then, sor, there was the other great poet, who was as true an Oirishman as ever lived—they call him *Bobby Burns!*’

“It was with great difficulty,” Balfe added, “that I could persuade Pat that, whilst the first portion of his observations was quite correct, he was entirely and irrevocably at sea about Scotland’s immortal poet, Burns.”

Balfe composed a very successful opera, the *Maid of Honour*, for production at Covent Garden, then

under the management of that eccentric genius, Monsieur Jullien, whose promenade concerts were for many years, both in London and in the large provincial towns, the most popular ever known in Great Britain. I have a lively recollection of Monsieur Jullien—his remarkable band, with the famous soloists, Koenig (cornet), Collinson (piccolo), Viotti Collins (violin), etc.—his wonderful expanded chest, covered with one mass of white shirt front, sparkling with diamond studs; his energetic conducting; his gilded chair of state, into which he would throw himself with perfect *sangfroid* and a languishing air after the performance of his "British Army Quadrilles," or any other sensational piece—a remarkable exhibition indeed.

Balfe got on very well with Jullien, but the public did not support the new opera as was anticipated, notwithstanding that it contained spirited dramatic music—graceful, vigorous, and sparkling—and those beautiful ballads, "In this old chair my father sat," and "Oh, smile as thou wert wont to smile": and it was ultimately withdrawn, to make way for some extravaganza or burlesque.

Before concluding my sketch of Balfe and his works, I should like to recommend lovers of opera music to obtain (even if it be only in the cheap piano-forte editions) copies of the *Enchantress*, in which

occurs the charming pirates' chorus,—

“Ever be happy and bright as thou art,
Pride of the pirate's heart,”

the *Rose of Castille*, *Satanella* (the lovely air, “Oh! the power of love,” is in this work), and Balfe's last opera, *Il Talismano*, which in many respects is superior to all the others in dignity and elevation of style, and in its superior orchestration,—Wagner and some of the “futuristic” forms of the lyric drama having evidently not been overlooked by Balfe in his composition of this, his last work.

The composer's young daughter, Victorine, became a great singer; she possessed natural musical gifts of the highest order, which were improved and heightened by cultivation under her father's assiduous guidance. Her personal charms and musical accomplishments so fascinated our ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir John F. Crampton, that she became Lady Crampton in a few weeks after her arrival in the Russian capital,—a circumstance which greatly delighted Balfe, who wrote to a friend, “Well, now both my girls are well provided for, and I am a happy old gentleman.”

But it must not be supposed from what I have said that Balfe escaped during his life the sharp daggers of criticism, or the malevolent attacks of jealous rivals. After the production of his opera

Geraldine, there was an "outpouring of abuse" by the critics, to which Charles Lamb Kenney, who wrote an admirable and delightful memoir of Balfe, thus alludes:—

"To look back at these effusions, as I have done, fills one with astonishment that persons capable of expressing themselves in the language of educated men should have allowed the paltriest jealousy and the most shortsighted malice to have overcome in them all sense of decency, all dictates of prudent judgment, all habits of ordinary courtesy, to say nothing of common respect for truth. In the teeth of the high estimate pronounced by foreign critics, despite their natural jealousy of an interloper, Balfe's last opera was uncompromisingly declared void of all merit, without a tune or a passage that could be remembered—one of the feeblest operas ever produced, the great success of which was to be regretted rather than rejoiced at."

In these effusions, however, it was too evident that what aggrieved the writers most was that Balfe had alone among the English composers of the day followed up one success with another, and then another, and gave no signs of exhaustion; but, on the contrary, seemed bent on commanding and maintaining a foremost position by a rapid series of unflagging

efforts, supported by extraordinary powers of labour and a vein of inspiration never at fault. Although these unfair and most unkind criticisms touched Balfe's tender and too susceptible feelings, it did not affect his material prosperity or his high reputation with the world at large; and, when he was "numbered with the majority" his detractors in life were among his greatest admirers.

In 1864, Balfe left his London residence, and retired to Rowney Abbey, in Hertfordshire, where, in 1870, he died, partly from having caught cold, and partly from the shock he experienced through the death of his elder and favourite daughter. "How he was regretted," says Kenney, "how honoured through the length and breadth of the land in the public notices of his death, is too well known to need recalling."

Balfe's remains were laid in the earth at Kensal Green, where a simple but imposing granite monument, erected by his widow, marks his grave.

XI.

W. VINCENT WALLACE.

"NOT the ghost of a tune in the whole lot," said Wallace, in the course of a long conversation we had about "rising composers" one afternoon, at his handsomely appointed rooms in Berners Street, London.

"My dear boy," added Wallace, with that pretty little Irish accent he carried about with him, "we live in an age of *mechanism*. Originality, real poetry (like Moore's), dramatic feeling, taste, naturalness, and fire seem to have been banished from the land; and I fear that all these wonderful baths recommended by the doctors have had something to do with it, and are washing the very life and soul out of the present as well as of the rising generation."

This burst of combined common sense and Hibernian humour made me laugh consumedly; but I entirely agreed with him, and said: "My dear Mary Turner," the old travestied title of his great



WILLIAM VINCENT WALLACE.

opera *Maritana*, "you and our good friend Balfe have the best possible credentials for uttering authoritative opinions on this subject; for if ever two composers possessed a vein of rich, spontaneous melody, you are the men, and can honestly lay claim to the position of premier melodists in our midst. Moreover, the mechanical difficulties which present themselves in nearly all our modern compositions, especially for manual-keyed instruments, demand from musical students such an unlimited amount of downright hard work and practice as to knock out of what many of them are pleased to call their "minds" that little taste for composition, poetic thoughts, and dramatic inspiration, which nature may have planted in them. I have myself scores of clever pianoforte pupils, who, by close, constant, and continuous labour, have mastered all Bach's forty-eight preludes and fugues, Beethoven's sonatas, and Cramer's studies; but with the exception of three or four (*ladies*, of course!), I could not, with all my own natural warmth of temperament and enthusiasm, infuse into their fingers the *modus operandi* of taste, spirit, and expression. The glories of art, the majesty of nature, the inexpressible charm of poetry, the grand and splendid visions which are carved by the imagination of the poet (not always 'dreams'),—these seem to have had but little attrac-

tion, and no abiding place in their hearts. It is so also with modern composers, very few excepted. I have waded through numbers of new works, many of them composed for our great musical festivals; and 'not a ghost of a tune,' as you said at the beginning of our conversation, could I find in any. None of these writers appear to have been brought face to face with the loveliness of nature—pellucid streams, clear upper and highly attenuated air, richly foliated woods, long-reaching valleys, heather-clad moors, and big, towering mountains.

"Now then, Wallace, after this little confab, let us have some music. Will you, in the generosity of your Hibernian nature, play *twice* to me? First, I want one of your sweet improvisations, if only short; and second, let me hear your own rendering of that fascinating of all English operatic airs, 'Scenes that are brightest,' from *Maritana*."

It was on a hot summer afternoon in 1861, only four years before Wallace died. The memory of that improvisation will never die, at least till I myself die. He was then suffering from rheumatic gout, his left hand being much affected; but he sat down to the grand Steinway pianoforte, which he had recently brought from New York, and extemporized on a sweet theme in F major. For ten or twelve minutes I was entranced with his treatment

of the melody, his fertile imagination, and his remarkably delicate, responsive touch. When he had finished, and had kindly insisted on my partaking of his favourite beverage, champagne and claret, he went again to the piano, and began "Scenes that are brightest"; and, after playing that exquisite air in varied and most expressive style, he gradually merged into another beautiful song in *Maritana*, "Alas! those chimes so sweetly sounding."

"In happy moments," as his *confrère* Balfe sang, the time passed away; and I lived in a music-dream-land, oh! so sweet, oh! so lovely, that I could have stayed for ever by his side, listening to and admiring that Divine music. But there was a whole world in that afternoon with William Vincent Wallace.

"And now," he said, "you smoke, I suppose, like most musicians and composers, the best of whom are generally Bohemians."

He handed me a cigar of the finest leaf, and he himself lighted it in the most careful way.

"Well, let's have a chat," he said; "and first I want to tell you something about pianofortes, respecting which, I am very sorry to say, our English makers do not know as much as they ought to know. Now listen to the bass of this Steinway." And he played on the pianoforte a succession of

octaves in the bass downwards, and said jocosely, with an Irish accent, "Now, me darlin', isn't that almost equal to the pedal pipes in your grand Leeds organ?"

"No doubt," I said, "they are really very fine; but still I like the sweet evenness of Broadwood's and Collard's tone; and I feel sure that when they perceive the advantage to be gained by obtaining a larger and better bass in their instruments they will take good care to make it." And so it has turned out, for both these great English makers have not been above taking a hint from even our sometimes abused "Brother Jonathan."

During our pleasant smoke and friendly chat—for

"A merrier man,
Within the limit of becoming mirth
I never spent an hour's talk withal"—

Wallace told me many witty, curious stories. I much regret that I did not make notes of all. Yet there are one or two I do remember, and which I will give in the words of the composer of *Maritana* and *Lurline*, as nearly as I can recall them. After I had told him a Yorkshire tale, at which he laughed immoderately, he said,—

"You know Alboni and her husband, the Count de Pepoli?"

"Certainly," I said; "I know both well, and more charming people do not exist; and as to Alboni, she possesses the grandest voice, and the most beautiful, true, Italian style I can call to mind. Her singing of Rossini's 'Non piu mesta,' with the variations, surpasses anything in that way I have ever heard."

"Undoubtedly," Wallace said; "I can endorse all you say; she is a genius of the first vocal order; and not only is she a great singer, but her tact and wit are equal to her musical knowledge and brilliancy of execution. I will give you a remarkable instance. Alboni was announced to sing in Trieste, in the *Barber of Seville*, and on the day of her arrival she was told that a cabal was being organized against her, and that her success on this first appearance was very doubtful. I happened to be in Trieste at the time, and felt much interest in Alboni's *début*. She went to the *estaminet*, and mingled amongst the conspirators; her short locks, full figure, and *dégagé* air, rendering it difficult to divine her sex.

"'I am a stranger,' said Alboni, addressing herself to the Brutus of the cabal; 'but if there's fun on hand count on me.'

"'Agreed,' was the reply; 'we are preparing to hiss down a *cantatrice* this evening.'

"'What has she done, anything wicked?'

“‘We know nothing about her, except that she comes from Rome; and we wish to have no singers here of whose reputation we are not the creators.’

“‘Well, what part am I to play in this game?’

“‘Take this whistle; each of us carries a similar one; and at a signal which will be given after the air of Rosina in the *Barbière*, you have but to add to the tempest that will be raised.’

“She received from the cabal chief a pretty black whistle attached to a red ribbon; and when she appeared to address her jealous tutor in the opera, half a dozen whistles sounded through the theatre, anticipating the signal to be given by the leader of the cabal. I was in the stage box, and shall never forget the scene. Alboni advanced to the footlights, and displayed the whistle suspended round her neck. ‘Gentlemen,’ said she, with a sweet and pleasant smile, ‘*we* must not hiss *me*, but the cava-tina; you have commenced too soon.’

“There was a moment of silence, then thunders of applause rang through the house. The *prima donna* was called that night before the house eleven times; and, when I met her afterwards in company with the director, she said cheerfully to him, ‘My dear *impresario*, it is here as in politics—you must lead the movement, or else be swept away.’”

When Wallace had finished this interesting anec-

dote, he went spontaneously to the piano, smoking his cigar; and, half unconsciously, breathed forth, in tender tones, the emotions of his soul. The tones melted into the same melodies he had played at my request previously. I was overcome with silent delight, and I mused, ruminated, and thought—well, we who only hear music as it has been imperfectly expressed in voice and instrument, as it stammers its burden through human or arbitrary mechanism, such as alone were at hand to translate the message as it came to the souls of the masters, can but faintly imagine what that music must have been as those souls heard it, that tone-world amid whose unearthly beauty they dwelt perpetually, and of which their works, as we know them, are but an earthly hint and shadow. Walking in that realm, and communing with its diviner creations, it is no wonder that such spirits as Wallace have ever despised the mortal frame they bore about the world. "I have written with my heart's blood and my bone's marrow," is the epitaph of all great men.

Wallace was undoubtedly one of those whom God has gifted with genius; one of those in whom its principles, unrecognised, are present when consciousness begins to dawn upon the infant mind, and everything within and without tends, at first indirectly, to develop the innate susceptibility to im-

pressions of the beautiful, from which all true music springs.

It is certain that, where true genius exists, its very earliest years are susceptible to the most rapturous sensations from musical sounds. It may be that the gifted one is unable to continue the musical ideas it dwells so dotingly upon; it may be also that he cannot analyse the emotions which shake the young heart with a fulness of delight: but the soul recognises the harmony which is a principle of its existence, an essence of its being; and the mystic spring is unsealed from whence in after years shall flow the streams of melody that will immortalise a name, and make posterity its debtor.

William Vincent Wallace first saw the light at Waterford in 1814, and was the son of Mr. William Wallace, bandmaster of the 29th regiment of the line, himself an excellent practical musician, who could play nearly every wind instrument in the band, besides stringed instruments and the piano-forte. Vincent was "all there" from his youth upwards; he insisted on playing all the instruments upon which his father performed; and, at the age of fifteen, he could excel him on the pianoforte and the violin.

At eighteen Wallace directed a performance of Beethoven's *Mount of Olives* in Dublin; and, as his

health broke down, he took the advice tendered to him by his physician, and went off to Australia, where he obtained renewed strength and vigour in the capacity of a sheep farmer. Ultimately, after visiting all the chief cities of the world, he returned to Great Britain; and, with the friendly co-operation and advice of his true and trusty friend Mr. Beale (Cramer, Beale & Co.), he made his mark on this "tight little island" of ours.

Wallace was not only a brilliant pianist, but a fine performer on the violin; indeed it is impossible to say upon which instrument he the more excelled. It was however as a pianist that he took up his position in London, and that too when there were many distinguished players already in the field. I remember what he told me respecting his first compositions for the pianoforte, which he offered for sale to a leading London music publisher. "I called on the head of the firm, and played him one or two of my pieces, those which had been received in New York and other cities with great favour. The 'party' (as he called him) was very bland, and requested me to call again that day week, which I did, and was politely handed back all my MSS., 'declined with thanks.'"

After the triumphant success of his opera *Mari-tana*, the same publisher called at his rooms, and

paid him twenty guineas for one of the very pieces he had formerly refused, even as a gift; and then they both had a hearty laugh at the turn of fortune's wheel.

Shortly after his arrival in London from New York, in 1845, Wallace was asked by the well-known librettist, Edward Fitzball, to compose music to an opera entitled *Don Cæsar de Bazan*. The composer readily acquiesced, and the result was what we now know as *Maritana*. Wallace was then in his prime—full of health, strength, vigour, intellect, and spirit. He worked with a will, rapidly, and with the greatest success; indeed, there is no English opera to surpass *Maritana*, whether we regard its opulence of melody, its strictly harmonical correctness and construction, or its beautifully developed themes from the first note of the overture to the last utterance of the final number. Mr. Frederick Beale (the father of the famous Willert Beale, who wrote such charming music and poetry under the *nom de guerre* of Walter Maynard) perceived at once the value of Wallace's music; and, after hearing from the composer the first act, walked off with the score under his arm, and closed with him as to terms, etc.

Wallace found in Mr. Beale a great and good friend, and he migrated soon from his rooms in Berners Street to Albion Lodge, St. John's Wood,

where he finished his opera *Maritana*, and began another work, equally beautiful in its style, entitled *Lurline*. Beale arranged with the well-known Alfred Bunn to produce *Maritana* at Drury Lane. After the first rehearsal, it was found that Miss Poole, the operatic contralto of the day, had no song; whereupon Wallace very shortly produced that charming air, now so popular, "Alas! those chimes."

Besides *Maritana* and *Lurline*, Wallace subsequently produced the *Amber Witch* and the *Desert Flower*, both of which operas contain music of unmistakable power and genius, though not of a character calculated to lay hold of the minds and tastes of the general public. He began another opera, the *Maid of Zurich*; and he sketched out, when staying at Wiesbaden, two German operas, named *Gulnare* and *Olga*.

Not only was Wallace great as an operatic composer, but he produced many pianoforte works, songs, and other fugitive pieces, all of which are, to use an old and useful aphorism, as full of music "as an egg is of meat." The eminent publishers, Messrs. Cocks & Co., of New Burlington Street, London, issued a catalogue of their Wallace compositions; and I can assure all my readers that there is not *one*, out of a large number, unworthy of attention and study.

In the latter part of his career Wallace went to Paris, where he revelled in the fellowship of the most musical minds in the world. He was commissioned to write a work for the Grand Opera of Paris, a point of the highest ambition to all composers, and one the most difficult for a foreigner to attain. He had not worked long at this prime work of his life, before he was, like Milton, Macfarren, Smart, and other great masters, afflicted with blindness. After enduring great agony and anxiety, he was ordered by his physician to take a trip to South America, and this step undoubtedly secured for him a release from pain and ease from care; but he shortly returned to London, and then again visited France, where, at the Château de Bagen, Haute Garonne, he breathed his last, on October 12th, 1865.

Like many other distinguished musicians and composers, Wallace was not happy in his domestic life. His first wife committed suicide at his rooms in Maddox Street, a fatality which very seriously affected him, and made him extremely anxious and unhappy. His second wife, the well-known Madame Stoepel, the pianist, is, I believe, at the time I write, still alive, and resides in New York.

To be quiet and undisturbed during the composition of the music to the *Amber Witch*, he took a cottage at Ealing, and bought a horse; horse exer-

cise, he assured a mutual friend, gave him more ideas than any other occupation!

Apart from his professional acquirements, Wallace was a most exemplary man. Quick in the perception of character, and an excellent linguist, he was well stored with information from travelling, and from reading German, Italian, French, and English literature; he was also brilliant in conversational powers, a most affectionate parent, and a warm-hearted, hospitable friend; indeed, "take him for all in all," I can scarcely remember his equal.

Undoubtedly he had "a most prolific pen," and nothing came from it that was not well digested, well considered, polished, and worthy of his reputation. It is much to be regretted that the life of such a man, whose career was so full of incident, accident, and adventure, has not been given to the world. Musical biographies contain but few particulars respecting this most admirable and accomplished composer. His was truly an eventful and a valuable life, one that could not fail to interest all who honour genius, respect earnest labour, and admire indomitable perseverance.

As I have before intimated, Wallace suffered acutely from frequent attacks of rheumatic gout, but the immediate cause of his death was congestion of the lungs. He was, like all good musicians who

possess *hearts* as well as heads, passionately fond of poetry, and would often quote a couplet or a verse in the course of and *à propos* to his conversation. But now—

“The faint voice of the minstrel is heard no more,
And sorrow has dimmed his eye;
His last song of love and of women is o'er,
And his harp is hung on high.”

XII.

SIGISMUND THALBERG.

THE famous and delightful *virtuoso*, Sigismund Thalberg, the subject of this sketch, was born at Geneva in 1812, and died on his own beautiful vine-clad estate near Naples in 1871.

Thalberg and Mario were, to my mind, the *beau idéal* of cultivated, polished musicians. Both were gentlemen by birth and education, both possessed manners refined and elegant, and both were handsome men. No wonder that they were admired by the male and adored by the female sex; for, in addition to their virtues and attractions as men, they carried about with them the inexpressible charm and magnetism of artistic superiority and supremacy.

Would that we had a few more such artists in our day! Would that taste, refinement, cultivation, *bonhomie*, considerate feeling for and kindness to others, less egotism, less bounce, less contentment with a very superficial knowledge of most things beyond mere cold lamplight *technique*, prevailed

now with musicians, as it did with the two distinguished characters I have named !

Let us hope that any of my musical brethren who may read this will pardon my exclamations and my "wee bit o' lecturin' ;" but my experience teaches me that we English "professors of the Divine art" might *all* improve ourselves in the manner and on the points I have indicated.

Thalberg was simply a marvel as a pianist. One could have listened to him "for ever and a day." Not so with many other great artists; no, not even with Rubinstein, or with Bülow. His wrist, hand, and fingers exhibited a variety of position and a facility of execution truly wonderful. He obtained a uniformity of touch and tone, a celerity, a power, and a certainty of command over the most distant intervals, almost inconceivable.

"When we hear Thalberg play," says Schumann, "we wonder from whence he gets all his fingers." "Either by the natural conformation of his hands," says one of his biographers, "or by the most felicitous practice, he acquired an equality of touch and an amazing division of his fingers, which enabled him to dispose a harmony in a manner as extended and effective as the modern orchestra. By means of the elasticity and control which he displayed in his touch, the prodigious power of his wrists, the ex-

quisite brilliancy of his tone, and the rapidity and certainty with which he passed from one distant interval to another, he so separated the different features of his accompaniment that his performance had truly the effect of four hands rather than the usual allotment given to an ordinary being."

There can be no doubt indeed that his perfect unity of strength in every finger afforded an ever-ready opportunity in the varied *arpeggio* for the most unlimited extensions; and the precision and lightning-like celerity with which they were ever and anon executed completely bewildered and astonished the unpractised ear, and indeed upset the preconceived notions of the most skilled professors as to what is and what is not practicable on the instrument. It was in *bringing together* the difficulties of the modern studio, during the treatment of some simple air or some imposing *canto fermo*, that Thalberg displayed such extraordinary facility. You could at one moment hear a distinct melody for the right hand, accompanied with *tremando* harmonies for the same hand, whilst the left would be employed in the most playful coruscations of demi-semiquavers, which were rendered the more dramatic by the startling octave with which they commenced. There were therefore four distinct features to develop, and it is in the extraordinary power which

he possessed of dividing his hands, as it were, into four parts, and producing from each a separate, marked, and essentially different quality of tone, that Thalberg overwhelmed his auditors with astonishment and admiration.

I need scarcely observe that, to enable this magician pianist to produce his marvellous and perfectly original effects, he was compelled to compose his own music, just as Paganini did for the violin. At the age of twenty-seven he had produced nearly thirty original works, chiefly of the class calculated to display his own unique style and execution; but many were of a different type, and proved that Thalberg was capable of successfully writing concertos and sonatas on the lines of the great masters.

In his own style there is the splendid *Fantasie sur les Huguenots*, *Mosè in Egitto*, *God Save the Queen*, *Rule Britannia*, and, the most popular of all, *Home, Sweet Home*. The three first of these unfold great wonders, wherein the *canto firmo* is brought out with a power surpassing the imagination of those who had not known the strength of his wrist, and in which it was perceived by the critics that the composer had heaped one difficulty on another, like Pelion on Ossa, so that the listener became staggered with the realization of impossibilities.

Of the more classic or sober class of his composi-

tions, may be mentioned his lovely studies and nocturnes; the *Fantasia in B Minor* (Op. 22), performed at his first appearance before the London Philharmonic Society in 1837; the *Art de Chant* for the pianoforte, in which he arranged with perfect grace and singing effect some of the most classic and popular melodies, such as "Deh Vieni" (Mozart), "Per Pieta" (Stradella), "Casta Diva" (Bellini), etc.

Many thousands of pianists, professional and amateur, have practised Thalberg's brilliant pieces until both their fingers and their heads have ached hopelessly; and whilst numbers have undoubtedly acquired great dexterity—and some concert-players have traded for years upon two or three of the most showy of his pieces, as their best stock in hand—yet those who, like myself, have frequently heard this great artist himself perform the same music, are compelled to admit the futility and weakness of the best of his imitators. But then it must be admitted that Thalberg was an artist who was *per se* one of the most delightful persons one could see, or hear, or know (the mystery of his birth, and his supposed royal parentage, adding to the interest); and it is perhaps scarcely to be expected that the aspiring army of "light-fingered gentry" who followed in his wake could successfully imitate the great original.

Our hero made his mark before he was fifteen; and ten years later he had implanted his indelible stamp, not only on the general public, whom he *always* fascinated with his wondrous manipulation, but more especially upon the musical *cogniscenti* of the principal capitals in Europe; and this latter fact gave him more pleasure and satisfaction than anything else, for he felt, as public performers all feel, that there are few prouder honours to be won than those bestowed upon a man by his fellow workers.

Thalberg's immense popularity, and the unbounded enthusiasm his playing and works produced in Paris, unfortunately excited the jealousy of Liszt, who was striving for the applause of the public at the same time. On one occasion the two met, and Liszt proposed that they should play a duet in public, whereupon Thalberg sharply replied, "*Je n'aime pas d'être accompagné*" (I am not fond of being accompanied), which greatly amused the Parisians. On another occasion Liszt made free to tell Thalberg that he did not admire his compositions; when the latter replied, "Since you do not like my compositions, Liszt, I do not like yours; indeed, their style is wild and unconnected, so odd that it can scarcely be called composition at all!"

And Thalberg was right. Liszt was one of the greatest and most astonishing pianists ever heard;

but, after a very careful study of many of his works, I have arrived at the conclusion (and it must be taken merely as an individual opinion) that, with few and rare exceptions, I would as soon study his compositions further, and labour to extract real music from them, as I should expect enjoyment from partaking of a plate of gooseberry tart and White's pickles—*mixed!*

The first time I heard Thalberg play was in the Old Theatre Royal at Exeter, where he appeared as one of a touring party; and at the time I was a chorister in the grand cathedral of dear old "Semper Fidelis." Not having gone beyond Herz's exercises and scales and Clementi's sonatinas, and not having heard much brilliant pianoforte playing (it was before Dr. Wesley came), my amazement at Thalberg's *tour de force*, and all the rest of his bewildering digitation, knew no bounds. To me, as I well remember, it was not only a delicious musical treat, but a red letter day, for ever to remain written on the tablet of my memory. The chief piece which so greatly delighted my youthful mind was his now famous arrangement of *Home, Sweet Home* (not then published), in which the melody, as we all know, is never lost sight of, but stands out prominently as the chief figure in a picture, and, as I then thought, surrounded by thousands of cherubim and

seraphim, singing their lightning-like scales, and flying about in every possible and impossible direction.

Happy childhood! Would that I had never known a less innocent, a less rapturous, a less thrilling pleasure than that! It is impossible to eradicate from the mind of the youthful musician these early fascinating impressions; and why should we? Nothing in after-life comes near them for real, captivating, soul-felt pleasure. When I retired that night to my lonely bed, I was still (in remembrance) listening in ravishment to the music which Thalberg conjured, like a magician, from his instrument: hour after hour, alternately asleep and awake, I listened to his tones, and to the bewitching melodies he had produced at that memorable and never-to-be-forgotten concert.

How little could I then imagine that, many years afterwards, in the dim future, I myself should be performing on a grand organ to this same inimitable master! But it was so; and here is the short notice of the event, taken from the *Musical Standard* of November 1st, 1862:

“LEEDS.—THALBERG AND THE TOWN HALL ORGAN.—The great pianist and composer having expressed a wish to hear the grand organ in the

Leeds Town Hall, Dr. Spark attended on October 16th, and gave a private performance of six pieces to M. Thalberg and a select company of connoisseurs. Thalberg applauded each of the pieces, and expressed to the town clerk, as well as to Mr. John Hopkinson and others who were present, his great delight with the organ and the performance."

The kind and flattering letter he wrote to me afterwards I must suppress, for obvious reasons. The report goes on to say :

"M. Thalberg afterwards played some time on the organ himself, expressing his pleasure at the tone, as he tried the stops separately and in combination. He also said that 'the full power of the organ was all grand tone—all music, and nothing noisy.' We are quite sure that these sentiments will afford great satisfaction to the good people of Leeds, while they will be read with interest by musicians generally."

To this report, from a leading musical serial, I may add that we were all greatly astonished when Thalberg sat down and extemporised on the organ, and in such a solid, steady style, playing clearly in four or five parts, and we were then unable to

account for it; but afterwards, in a long conversation we had at the hotel, in company with the famous John Parry (of whom more anon), I found, what is since well known from his biographies, that he had studied for some years under Sechter, the learned organist to the court of Vienna, not only for the purpose of working at counterpoint and composition, but also to play the organ, believing, as he said, that the pianists, like Mendelssohn, who well knew that instrument, were better able to play the pianoforte in a more sustained and smooth style, especially in slow movements, than those who did not avail themselves of a similar advantage.

"But you are aware, Monsieur Thalberg, that there appears to be a consensus of opinion among *non*-organists, that those who have to manipulate the king of instruments much cannot succeed in obtaining a delicate touch on the pianoforte?"

"I beg your pardon," replied the pianist. "I know numbers of performers, at the head of whom is, of course, Mendelssohn, who are equally great at the organ and the pianoforte, and possess the requisite touch for both."

"Granted; but where the organs have a very heavy touch, as in most of the churches of Germany where I have played——"

"Bother your organs, German and English!"

exclaimed John Parry unexpectedly. "*My* organ is the organ of *taste*; and I'm quite ready, if you are, to start with the luncheon which Timothy Tablecloth says is ready."

John Parry, "inimitable John," was a great friend of Thalberg, the two being often together in the musical tourneys of the day. Parry was a vocalist, a pianist, and a composer, his chief *forte* being the singing and accompanying (the accompaniments vieing with the vocalism in charm, caprice, and attractiveness) humorous songs of what has been termed a *refined* cast, avoiding the vulgarity and coarseness so prevalent at the present day. His "Wanted, a Governess, fitted to fill the post of tuition with competent skill," "Wanted, a Wife," "Blue-Beard," "Fayre Rosamond," and similiar mirth-provoking emanations from his ingenious pen, were immensely popular; and Parry's rendering of them always found hearty acceptance from his auditors.

Parry, of course, possessed a fund of comical stories, one of which greatly amused both Thalberg and myself. "Sir James Scarlett," said John, "when at the bar, had to cross-examine a witness whose evidence he thought would be very damaging unless he could be bothered a little; and his only vulnerable point was said to be self-esteem. The witness

presented himself in the box—a portly, over-dressed person—and Scarlett took him in hand. ‘Mr. John Tomkins, I believe?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘You are a stock-broker?’ ‘I *ham*!’ Scarlett regarded him attentively for a few moments, and then said, ‘And a very fine, well-dressed *ham* you are, sir!’ The shout of laughter which followed completely disconcerted the witness, and the counsel’s point was gained.”

The two friends, Thalberg and Parry, became so intimate, that they nicknamed each other Mary and Sarah. Thalberg used to relate how Sarah dreaded the sea, and that on a voyage from Liverpool to Dublin he occupied a berth over his fellow traveller. During the night, the wind arose, and Mary in the upper berth was awaked by loud and painful vociferations below. Leaning over the side of the berth, Thalberg discovered the cause of the noise. It was Sarah, who, kneeling on the floor of the cabin, was praying aloud and earnestly, and vowing never to trust to the ocean waves again!

Afterwards, when he recovered from the horrid *mal de mer*, and was approaching land, “inimitable John,” *alias* Sarah, began, in a partly jovial, partly ejaculatory manner, to sing snatches of “Rule Britannia”; and Thalberg kept hearing something about “rules the waves—the wa—the . . . waves!” When Sarah had quite recovered, and was close to

the land, he began to look very proper, as if nothing had happened, and then quoted an appropriate verse in clear, mellifluous tones :

“Methinks I see the shining beach ;
The merry waves each after each,
Rebounding o’er the flints.
I spy the grim preventive spy !
The jolly boatmen standing nigh !
The maids in morning chintz !”

In 1851, Thalberg composed an opera called *Florinda*, which, although the cast included Sophie Cruvelli, Calzolari, Lablache, and other eminent singers, and although it was produced with great splendour at Her Majesty’s theatre, under the direction of Mr. Balfe, obtained at the best a *succès d’estime*.

Soon after this, he went to North America and to Brazil, where his singular ability as a pianist met with due recognition, both in an artistic and a pecuniary sense. His latest visits to England were in 1862-3, when, besides giving “recitals” in the Hanover Square Rooms, he made extensive tours through the provinces, from which he netted no less than £12,000. After that, allowing for a series of concerts given in Paris in 1865, Thalberg virtually abandoned the musical profession. He possessed a fine Italian estate, to which he retired, and where he

gave himself up wholly to the cultivation of the vine. His body is embalmed in a glass case in his drawing-room at Pausilippo, near Naples.

Many of the so-called "purists," few of whom can play any of Thalberg's compositions, affirm that his music is of the "fireworks school," and that it will not live. Indeed! It *will* live long after their shallow criticisms, and when their own bodies are numbered with the majority.

Let us see what Mendelssohn said. In a letter to his mother from Leipsic, after making an interesting comparison between Liszt and Thalberg, he declares his preference for Thalberg as a "*virtuoso*." Referring to the fantasia on themes, from Rossini's opera, *La Donna del Lago*, that great musician says: "It is an accumulation of the most delicate and exquisite effects, a continued succession of difficulties and embellishments exciting our astonishment, all being well devised, carried out with security and skill, and pervaded by the most refined taste."

Thalberg was a perfect model of good nature and simplicity; indeed, one rarely sees combined with such accomplishments that perfect amenity of nature requisite to complete the thoroughbred gentleman.

He was exceedingly generous in his praise of other artists, and I do not think that the demon

“Envy, eldest born of hell,”

ever had a place in his almost too amiable mind. His admiration of Malibran, the great singer, was unbounded. He would dwell with particular delight upon a romance of her own composition; and, seating himself at the pianoforte, would repeat over and over again a passage, into which, he said, when she sang it, she poured out her very soul. “The tone, the manner, the expression,” he would add, “are all gone with her; no description can arrest or preserve them.”

Thalberg was invited to perform at Buckingham Palace, soon after the accession of Queen Victoria. The Queen, in complimenting him upon his great talent, expressed her regret that she had not heard him before, but promised herself a frequent repetition of the gratification. He was again summoned to the palace just before his departure on a provincial tour whereupon her Majesty was pleased to give him five subjects to work upon. He was so much exhausted with his disproportionate task that he went home ill. An Italian friend of mine saw him on the following day; and, when he congratulated him upon his triumph, he said, “*Bel trionfo!*”—a fine triumph indeed to be nearly killed!

The Queen kept up her pianoforte practice at that

time, and also took singing lessons from Signor Lablache, whose ponderous bass voice and elegant style one can never forget, and are indeed matters of history.

A friend of mine, who knew Thalberg well for many years, tells me that he was "a most incorrigible punster in all languages." At any rate, like most of the composers and performers I have known, he was full of frolic and fun when "off duty." He was as merry and jovial after his marriage with the daughter of Lablache as he was before; and this is a fact which I hope will be duly appreciated by the fair sex, as some of these "horrid men" do not seem to see it, you know.

The *Musical World* of May 20th, 1871, thus concludes its obituary notice of this remarkable musician :

"One of his favourite pupils here was Madame Arabella Goddard, to whom he imparted the secret of interpreting most of his principal fantasias, which she has so often shown she possesses to perfection. Socially, Thalberg was one of the most amiable, and consequently one of the most popular of artists. He had troops of friends, and, we may say without fear of contradiction, not a single

enemy. To enumerate his published works would take more space than we have at disposal. We are convinced that the greater part of them will long live as historical examples of a new and delightful phase in art."

XIII.

GEORGE LINLEY, POET AND MUSICIAN.

THE name of Linley is honoured and remembered wherever English music is known. George Linley, the subject of the present sketch, was a Yorkshireman, and one of the many Yorkshiremen of his class and calling for whom, personally, I entertain much veneration and respect. He was born in Leeds in 1805, in the centre of the town, just a few doors from where the well-known Henry Inchbold, printer, stationer, and publisher, lived and flourished for so many years. Linley died in London in 1865.

The Linleys of a former generation were remarkable people. Thomas Linley, a Somersetshire man, was born in 1725, and died in 1795, in London. He managed and conducted the oratorios at Drury Lane theatre conjointly with Dr. S. Arnold. His eldest daughter, Eliza Ann, is said to have been one of the most beautiful women of her day and generation, and was well known as the "Maid of Bath." In the height of her fascination, beauty, and vocal talents, she was met and conquered by the famous

orator and "playwright," Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

The songs which Mrs. Sheridan's father wrote to display her lovely voice are known and remembered to this day; one of them being still often sung in public, *Oh, bid your faithful Ariel fly*. When I was quite a young man, and conducted the concerts in the old Leeds Music Hall, that song was a great favourite with the distinguished vocalist, Mrs. Sunderland, who was always called the "Yorkshire Queen of Song"; and, oddly enough, she had no other more favourite song than *I cannot Mind my Wheel, Mother*, written and composed by George Linley, the Leeds poet and musician, of whom personally, I believe, she knew nothing.

There were three daughters of Thomas Linley, of Bath—Eliza Ann, Mary, and Maria. The last was married to Mr. R. Tickell; and there was a story told to me by my father, when I was a youngster, about her, and which was afterwards corroborated by my first music master, Mr. Paddon, organist of Exeter Cathedral, who, according to the custom of the period, was kind enough to box my ears and cheeks whenever I played a wrong note or in wrong time, and which made a sharp impression both on my mind and face, and has never been forgotten. This story was that Maria Tickell (Linley), shortly before her death, sat up in bed, and, with a tragic

animation, tempered with a heaven-born genius that saw into the far off land, sang in mellifluous tones—

“ Angels ever bright and fair,
Take, oh take me to your care !”

Shortly after this, she gently breathed her last. She doted on her husband; greatly respected him, and treated him as a genius; and the last coherent couplet she was heard to utter was—

“ O Death all eloquent ! you only prove
What dust we dote on when 'tis man we love.”

The most interesting of all the Linley family was the eldest son of Thomas Linley, of Bath, who bore the same name, and was a musical genius from his childhood. He went abroad; and in Florence, where he was studying under Nardini, he met with the immortal Mozart, between whom and himself there sprang up a warm friendship, which ended only with the death of Linley. When the youthful friends parted, they were bathed in tears; they loved each other with innocent, tender ardour, but they never met again.

Mozart and Linley, so long as breath remained, never forgot each other. Mozart had apparently life and fortune before him; Linley was already condemned as a consumptive young man. They had long walks and long talks. Ah! what would

one not have given to have heard the conversations of these two geniuses, about their hearts' life—their beloved art, music!

At that time, Mozart was the very embodiment of cheerful-loving melody and harmony; all was sunshine, all was natural and child-like. Linley's heart was also brimful of love and music. He liked to go into the green meadows, and to talk to and with, as he said, "happy human creatures."

"Mozart," he is thought to have said, "your music is all bright and lovely; youths and maidens float by in the dance; laughing children, peeping from behind rose bushes, cover each other with blossoms; you are always full of love, of quiet enjoyment, and will, as long as you live, have a perpetual youthful mind. In your music, there is no shrill tone of suffering or of pain, only a sweet sorrow of longing for the beloved form which hovers in the far off evening-red, nor comes nearer, nor disappears. And, my dear Wolfgang, so long as that form still hovers there, the night comes not; for itself is the eternal evening-red, glowing on mountain and meadow!"

I do not know truly whether Linley *did* say this; if not, I must have dreamt it.

I love to ruminate thus over the sweet genius-spirits of the past, and especially to dwell on the happy, dear years of childhood.

“ Ah happy years ! once more who would not be a boy ? ”

George Linley, our hero, was a born musician and poet ; certainly he was not an accomplished or a learned scholar. He possessed a wonderful amount of common-sense ; he was utterly devoid of conceit and arrogance ; and it was what he considered these gross defects in others (especially in the well-known musical critic of the *Athenæum* of the period) that led Linley to write one of the most severe and trenchant *brochures*, entitled “ Musical Cynics,” that has ever been penned by an Englishman.

I remember when he gave me a copy, in the warehouse of Messrs. Addison & Lucas, London music publishers ; and he, in his friendly way, said, “ Now, my dear boy, carefully read this as you go back to Leeds ; and, when I come down to deliver my new lecture on ‘ Mary Queen of Scots,’ which I shall do soon, let me know your candid opinion, and whether you don’t think I have potted that old *Athenæum* scamp for once in his life.”

As I had been pretty well trained in the science of music by Wesley, Smart, and others, Linley used to ask me to look over the accompaniments to his songs, etc., and to touch up his symphonies. I do not know anything that gave me greater pleasure than this little assistance, the more especially as he often sent me some lovely original lines, words that

were infinitely superior in value to the very small help I gave him from a musical point of view.

In early life I set to music Thomas Moore's beautiful lines, beginning—

“ Being weary of love,
I flew to the grove,
And chose me a tree of the fairest
Saying, ‘ Pretty rose tree,
Thou my mistress shalt be
And I'll worship each bud thou bearest.’ ”

The music to this song was composed for my accomplished elder sister Elizabeth, to whom I owed almost everything during my youth, for help, encouragement, and advice in my musical aspirations; but it was found that the copyright of the words had not expired; and so my dear old friend George Linley paraphrased it in the following admirable way, and it was shortly afterwards published by Cramer, Beale, & Co. :

“ Pretty lily ! the pride
Of the lake's silver tide,
Thou look'st to the day star above thee;
'Mid thy leaves pure and fair
Dwells no sorrow, nor care,
And I sigh in my heart, I could love thee.
Like pearl-drops so brightly beaming,
Thine eye gentle light is streaming.
From the cold world I flee,
To gaze upon thee,
As thou look'st to the sun above thee.

Though thy pale head may bend,
When the rain-clouds descend,
The storm and the shower cannot wound thee ;
'Mid the blast rude and chill,
Thou art seen smiling still,
For the sunshine of love is around thee.
Although I thee fondly cherish,
I know thou art doomed to perish ;
Yet while life dwells in thee,
Thy companion I'll be,
As thou look'st to the sun above thee.'

George Linley was a brilliant conversationalist. Some of the happiest moments of my life were spent in his company, with our mutual friends, Thomas Blake, Robert Addison, Ignace Gibsone (the pianist and composer), and a few other kindred spirits. The last time I met the united friends was at Blake's rooms in Mornington Road, Regent's Park, about six months before Linley's death. In a homely, friendly fashion we had dined together; and dear old Blake brought out a bottle of O. P.—one of the special dozen the octogenarian Collard (Collard & Collard) had left him, and which he humorously said would preserve his life to a good old age, if

“ Not shaken
Before taken.”

“ Addison,” said Blake, “tell Spark how you got your Collard legacy reduced.”

"Well, I will tell him, for it's most amusing; and, if I had been a poor man, I should indeed have felt the cut most intensely."

"For years," said Addison, "I used to visit the rich old pianoforte maker every Saturday afternoon; and, after a beefsteak, we had one or two bottles of his oldest old port wine, either of 1820 or 1834 vintage. One Saturday afternoon, I met unexpectedly, on my way through St. Paul's Churchyard, my old friend Mr. Bianchi Taylor, a well-known teacher and composer, of Bath.

"‘My dear Addison,’ he said, ‘I’m delighted to see you. Come in here to the Cathedral Tavern (a nice ecclesiastical flavour there was always about that establishment, well-known to the vicars-choral of those days), ‘and let us have a glass of the famous old Madeira which I hear they can give you.’

"I did so; and we sat so long chatting and talking of our early days and frolics, that I elected not to visit old Collard that day, but to go home, and lay me down in peace, and rest.

"Well," continued Addison, "I went to see Collard the next week, and I perceived at once that there was something wrong; and at last the venerable gentleman came out with it.

"‘Addison,’ he said, ‘you vexed me greatly last week by not coming as usual; and especially as I

had got up a bottle of the oldest and most valuable port I had in my cellar; and I assure you I shan't easily forget your neglect.'

"It was in vain that I explained and apologised as well as I could. He died at the age of eighty-eight (and always attributed his longevity to the real, genuine vintage port he took for a great number of years), and knocked off from my legacy exactly one hundred pounds!"

Linley listened to this story very attentively, and said he would try and write a Christmas tale for one of the annuals, embodying all that Addison had told us, and of course enlarging and embellishing the same. But he never lived to carry out his intention. On that very night he became seriously ill, and we all noticed after dinner how deadly pale he was.

Blake, who had long been connected with Collard & Collard and Cramer, Beale, & Co., had a lovely pianoforte, and he asked one of his guests to play a piece; and then Linley desired that I would extemporise a little, "a talent," he added, "which your friend Henry Smart possesses to perfection." Happy thought! For some years I had known and had sung to my friends Linley's charming song, *The Spirit of Love keeps a Watch over Me*; so I ventured to take that pretty melody as a theme; and I

was getting on very nicely with a variation in the bass, when poor George Linley suddenly cried bitterly (he felt and knew that he would not live long), and, of course, all music and improvisation was at once given up; and indeed I never had the privilege of looking upon his expressive and kindly countenance again.

The words of this song are so sweet and flowing, that I am sure every one who admires lyric poetry and graceful versification will read the first verse with as much pleasure as I feel in making the quotation :

“Thou art gone from my gaze like a beautiful dream,
And I seek thee in vain, by the meadow and stream !
Oft I breathe thy dear name to the winds floating by,
But thy sweet voice is mute to my bosom's lone sigh.

In the stillness of night, when the stars mildly shine,
My heart fondly holds a communion with thine ;
For I feel thou art near, and wherever I may be,
That thy spirit of love keeps a watch over me.”

Every one knows that Linley wrote the words of Brinley Richards' popular national song, *God Bless the Prince of Wales*; and I may also mention that he suggested to the composer the kind of tune or melody which he thought would best suit the lines.

In addition to hundreds of fugitive songs, ballads, etc., Linley wrote the libretto of the romantic

opera, the *Gipsy's Warning*, which Sir Julius Benedict "wedded" to such admirable music. Some of the songs are really fine, especially the recitative and air which Henry Phillips and Herr Staudigl used to sing so grandly, "Rage, thou angry storm!"

Here is a part of this song, from which I infer that Linley, like Beethoven, was a man of intensely active affections and highly impressionable temperament, that he was a man of fine feeling and remarkable sensitiveness, and that he was indeed one of the best poet-musicians that England has ever produced.

Recitative, Ludovico :—

"I love this fierce and elemental strife!
What music in the loudly pealing thunder!
That which awakens fear in feeble hearts
But gives unto my restless mind new pleasure.
Rage, thou angry storm!
Darkly roll, ye thunders of the night,
Pour your vengeance down!
To my soul your fury yields delight.
Joy! joy! naught may repress my desires,
Death and hate my lips have sworn.
Joy! joy! darkness my bosom inspires,
Fear and fate I laugh to scorn.
Ride on, ye rolling thunders of the night!
Your fury yields unto my soul delight," etc.

Of a totally different character is the once extremely popular song, the *Young Recruit*, which

Mdlle. Jetty Treffz used to sing so very archly and effectively at Jullien's Promenade Concerts that she was generally compelled by the enthusiastic audience to sing it twice, nay even three and four times :—

“ See these ribbons gaily streaming !
 I'm a soldier now, Lizette.
 Yes, of battle I am dreaming,
 And the honour I shall get.
 With a sabre by my side,
 And a helmet on my brow,
 And a proud steed to ride,
 I shall rush on the foe :
 Yes, I flatter me, Lizette,
 'Tis a life that well will suit,
 The gay life of a young recruit.”

And then there was the *Swiss Girl*, which, as well as *Thou art gone from my gaze*, Madame Sainton Dolby used to sing with great acceptance and success :—

“ Oh! hear me, pretty Swiss!
 Come, roam the world with me ;
 Where grandeur shines,
 And wealth can make
 A paradise for thee.”

One of the most interesting of Linley's later productions was entitled “*Old Pictures in New Frames*,” and was published by Ewer & Co. about the year 1860. In his preface the author says :

"It is intended, in 'Old Pictures in New Frames,' to offer a fresh source of amusement in the form of fables in verse, wedded to popular melodies. To the juvenile community the author has already contributed a first and a second series of nursery songs and ballads, adapted to familiar tunes; and their success has been complete and remunerative. . . . The fables, after the manner of the ancients, embody three distinct classes, *viz.*, mixed, rational, and emblematical, and exhibit a marked character and style; and it is with some degree of confidence that this volume is submitted to the general public."

There were twenty-five of these interesting poetised fables, the first being "The Cock and the Fox," and the last "The Scorpion and the Tortoise":—

"It may be whim or something else,
It may be wind or weather;
New quarters they resolve to seek,
So sally forth together."

All Linley's versification is exquisitely musical. You cannot find any wrong accent or "false quantity." His rhymes always seem to carry with them their own melodies; they are, like those of Byron and of Moore, music in themselves.

He did not always write under his own name, but

adopted several *noms de plume*, "Churchill" being one. When Mr. Willert Beale displayed considerable talent and power as author and poet, it was Linley who was his second godfather, and dubbed him "Walter Maynard," by which name his best literary and musical works are now known.

I have already alluded to my good friend as an excellent, cheerful, and most entertaining companion. He was not only unassuming and agreeable, but he seemed to be quite unconscious of possessing any remarkable talent, such as he undoubtedly displayed in what he wrote.

Very little seems to be known of Linley's early career, excepting that he was undoubtedly born in Leeds, and that his early love of versifying got him into trouble, by his lampooning, like a second Shakespeare, some of the bigwigs of the town; and this led him to go and try his fortune in London. Joshua Easbury, a Quaker, was his first teacher, his chief schoolboy companion being the late revered solicitor and clerk to the magistrates, Robert Barr. After his death, in 1865, his widow presented the corporation of Leeds with his portrait, painted in oil by, it is supposed, the celebrated artist Schwanfelder (whose picture of himself hangs in the mayor's rooms), and it is now in one of the town clerk's offices.

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The late Mr. John Mayhall wrote a few admirable lines about Linley, which I cannot do better than quote, in concluding this sketch:—

“Linley was a kind-hearted, generous man, a true friend, and a genial, merry companion. He hated humbug with a mortal hatred, under whatever shape it appeared. It was this feeling that led him to be so severe in his celebrated satire, ‘Musical Cynics,’ in which Linley roughly handled those critics of the metropolitan press whom he considered ignorant of the true principles of the art about which they were employed to write. In all art, especially in music, he preferred soul, feeling, and taste, to pedantic knowledge and automatic mechanism, however wonderful and brilliant. He was not a profound musician, but his melodies will live in the hearts of thousands long after this generation shall have passed away. Linley died peacefully, after a long and trying illness, in the full possession of his intellect, and knowledge of his approaching dissolution.

“He was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery, on Friday, September 15th, 1865, being followed to the grave, as mourners and old friends, by Mr. Robert Addison, Mr. Thomas Blake, Mr. George Metzler, Signor Ferrari, Dr. Spark, etc. Linley left a widow,

two sons, and a daughter. One of his sons held an excellent Government appointment. The absence of the happy face and wit of George Linley from many a gathering of musical and literary men in London will be long felt as a loss not easily replaced."

XIV.

GRISI AND MARIO.

THOSE who know anything about operatic and dramatic music can hardly fail to call to mind the magic names, talents, and attractions of two of the greatest artists of the present century, Grisi and Mario; whose voices, singing, acting, and gentle manners everywhere evoked the greatest enthusiasm, and secured those golden tributes to their genius which it is satisfactory to know that they had not the weakness to despise.

Giulia Grisi was born at Milan, in 1812, and was the daughter of an officer of engineers under Napoleon. Her mother and all the family were musical; so that, with a soldier for a father and a singer for a mother, it was truly said that the future dramatic soprano came indeed of suitable parentage.

Mario, Conte di Candia, was born in 1812, at Genoa, and came of a very old and noble family. Both Grisi and Mario made their first great successes in Paris, when young, handsome, and vigorous. When she was of the age of eighteen, Rossini



GIUSEPPE MARIO.

(From Pougin's "Acteurs et Actrices d'Autrefois." By permission of the Publishers, Juven & Co., Paris.)

took much interest in Grisi. She had youth, uncommon personal attractions, a beautiful voice, and indications of that stage talent which was afterwards so remarkably developed.

Mario was also richly gifted for the dramatic stage, possessing, as he did, beauty of voice, face, and figure, with the most winning grace of Italian manner.

"They were," eloquently exclaims Walter Maynard, in one of his personal recollections, "an incomparable pair; more liberally endowed by nature with every attribute of personal beauty, vocal power, and dramatic genius, than any of their rivals. Their union was an inestimable gain to art, and their attachment to one another as romantic and devoted as that of any hero and heroine they ever impersonated. It was, at once, passionate and faithful; it was hallowed by their mutual pursuit in life; it sanctified their home; it gave incessantly renewed fire and zest to their representations upon the lyric stage." Mario was at first only a poor actor; but, under the gentle guidance and genius of Donna Giulia, he made such remarkable progress, that they were ultimately acknowledged to be two of the greatest histrionic singers that ever trod the operatic stage.

Never can I forget their singing and acting in the

Huguenots; it was as near perfection as any artistic performance can be. Everything seemed so natural, and yet so finished and refined; their grace and ease of manner were only equalled by their lovely voices and their delightful singing; and, when these two were joined in an operatic representation by Viardot Garcia and the distinguished basso Lablache, there was a combination of the very highest power, exciting admiration and enthusiasm of the warmest and most genuine kind.

Speaking of Lablache, who died at Naples in 1858, I may safely say, with one of his biographers: "We shall never see his like again. The Jove-like head, planted on a colossal body, seemed the incarnation of every priestly attribute, when the grand old druid, Oroveso, trod the stage. Who that ever saw and heard him can forget the majesty of his look and the thunder of his voice?" It might well have been said by Rossini that he need not describe the effect of the celebrated duet, "*Suoni la tromba*," as sung by Lablache and Tamburini, being quite sure that "it must have been heard all over the country."

On one occasion a rehearsal at Her Majesty's theatre being over sooner than he expected, and before the arrival of his brougham, Lablache sent his servant for a cab; and, when the driver saw the

great singer, he said, despairingly, "He'll never, never get in, sir!" The cab door was opened wide—sideways, frontways, headways, backways, the ponderous singer always failing to effect an entrance; at last, by the united efforts of some strong bystanders, Lablache was got inside, puffing and groaning from his exertions: but he soon got from bad to worse, for, wishing to change his position—he had inadvertently sat down with his back to the horse—the whole of his prodigious weight was, when he rose, upon the few slender boards forming the bottom of the cab. The driver, Lablache, and a large crowd which had been attracted by the terrible struggle which had been going on, were still more astonished when the boards gave way, and his feet and legs were seen standing in the road! Cabby swore, Lablache grinned, the crowd roared. No scene in a pantomime was ever more ludicrous. Fortunately, the weighty basso sustained no injury. If the horse had moved, the consequences would doubtless have been serious. To get him out, greater efforts were necessary than at first. The door was torn from its hinges, and the previously good-conditioned cab had become a complete wreck. The driver uttered some very strong language, very; but, on being assured that the damage would be made good, and that he would be remunerated for his loss

of time, he became pacified. It is more than probable that after this pretty little experience and unpleasant fiasco, Lablache did not again attempt to ride in a hack cab.

The other member of the famous vocal quartet, to whom I have not yet particularly alluded, was Madame Viardot (Garcia), one of the most accomplished singers and musicians in Europe. Possessed of a very fine voice, which had, like that of her more famous sister, Malibran, been highly cultivated by their experienced father, Manuel Garcia, she not only became a famous exponent of the best contralto parts in all the most popular operas, but she assiduously developed a highly refined taste for the highest order of classical music, and was the direct means of making known in the chief capitals of Europe many a beautiful gem which might otherwise have lain unnoticed and unused on the dusty shelves of the older class of music publishers. Madame Viardot could also play the organ well, and used to be pleased to give to the admirers of Bach one of his great fugues, either upon her own two-manual organ, which was built for her by Cavaillé Coll, in her charming *salon* in Paris, or she would boldly sit down to the grand organ in the Leeds Town Hall—as I once heard her—and play for some time with much taste, execution, and expression. She was

a great favourite with musicians generally, to whom she often gave some reliable information respecting rare publications or exceptionally good performances.

But to return to Grisi. Often she used to tell with great spirit to her friends the story of her *début*; how, when hardly fourteen years old, she sang the part of Emma, in *Zelmira*, at Bologna, at an hour's notice, the principal vocalist having been taken ill. From that moment the fame and fortune of Giulia Grisi became established, and she had only to make her way to Paris and London (which she did, however, with great difficulty at first), to find that her transcendent talents would be duly appreciated and amply rewarded.

Grisi and Mario were both in after life particularly fond of Dublin, in which city indeed they gave their celebrated farewell performances. On their return journey, I frequently saw them in Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds, generally accompanied by their three lovely young daughters, whom we would facetiously call "charming Marionettes."

The great tenor and some of his travelling companions would amuse their friends immensely by recounting a few of the incidents arising out of their peregrinations. Especially was the sea passage from Holyhead looked forward to in fear and

trembling, for it was much longer and more troublesome then than now.

On one occasion, the *impresario* (Mr. Willert Beale) asked an attenuated Frenchman, just as he had come on board, "Are you ill at sea?"

"No," he replied, looking very miserable at the thought. "I am nay-vare ill: but I am always vary seeke."

On another occasion, during their stay at Morisson's Hotel, where they were always made most comfortable, and felt at home, the *impresario* asked "boots" one morning, when he came to his room, "Well, Mike, and what did you think of the opera last night?" (Mike had been given a free ticket for the pit, to hear *Norma*).

"It's throuble I had to get in at all," replied Mike, surlily.

"How was that?" asked the manager, who was still in bed.

"Sure we had a fight for it," said "boots," a little more good-humouredly.

"But you were in the pit, were you not?"

"Ah! that I was," said Mike.

"And how do you think Madame Grisi sang?"

"What! the lady as is in 59, d'ye mean?"

"Yes," said the *impresario*.

"By the saints! 59 sang like an angel in the be-

ginning of the play; but how she did turn out when 81 riled her! and how she did scream at that poor little lady who's in 84!"

"You mean Adalgisa, Mike," said the *impresario*.

"Faith then I didn't know the name but what's on her boxes, and that ain't it," replied Mike.

"And what did you think of Oroveso?" asked the manager.

"I didn't hear him," said Mike; "but 82, as had some physic in the afternoon, seemed pretty much put out with 59 at the end, and made a mighty to do with the poor thing. Did you ever see such a set of fellows as those were in their nightgowns and sandy wigs?"

Mike by this time had melted, and became more talkative than usual. He alluded to the druids of the previous evening, and certainly their costumes were not becoming. The *impresario* tried to explain the plot of the opera; but Mike so completely identified the *dramatis personæ* with the number of the rooms they occupied in the hotel, that it was almost impossible to make him remember the characters they assumed on the stage.

Although Mario was such an inveterate smoker, he did not commence the practice—which unfortunately is not the case with many a youth of the present day—until he was eighteen years old. "I

have known him," said one of his daughters, "smoke thirty cigars a day; and the first thing he did on waking was to light his cigar, the last thing at night to put it out; though often he fell asleep with it alight in his mouth, at the risk of setting fire to the room." When Mario went to Russia, in 1849, the houses were built chiefly of wood, and smoking in the street was forbidden by the emperor. One bright cold day, the snow lying deep on the ground, Mario went to take his customary walk, the collar of his fur cloak thrown back, to the wonder of the Russians, who, smothered in fur up to their noses, thought the Italian tenor must be mad to leave his throat uncovered in their cold clime. He never covered his throat in any climate, nor for any cold wind or rain, and he never, he used to affirm, had his throat or lungs affected in consequence; indeed he went so far as to say that this habit kept his voice strong, and that his smoking prevented him from taking any chill.

Of Grisi it may truly be said that she was equally admirable in lyric tragedy, lyric comedy, and lyric melodrama. An enthusiastic writer once said of her, "To have seen and heard Giulia Grisi in her prime, and even in the early autumn of her glorious life of art, is one of those gifts of the gods which it is a



LUIGI LABLACHE.

comfort to feel is beyond the reach of time or change."

Grisi and Mario visited Leeds several times, twice to play in opera at the old Theatre Royal in Hunslet Lane, and to sing at three or four concerts given under my direction, first at the Music Hall in Albion Street (now a carpet warehouse), and afterwards at the Town Hall. They were always apparently happy and comfortable at the Scarborough Hotel, and afterwards at the Queen's; and were accompanied for the concerts by their *impresario*, Mr. Willert Beale, and by Mr. John Hatton—the popular and accomplished pianist, composer, and singer—a great favourite with Yorkshire choralists.

It was when Mario was in Leeds that he heard of the death of his mother, and he remained at the hotel in great grief for some days. The disappointment was considerable to the waiting audience, and many were the curious Yorkshireisms blurted roughly out on that occasion. When he was in his prime, the great tenor informed a friend that his average income, taking one year with another, was about £10,000 since the Aguado engagement. "London," he continued, "calculating £3,500, concerts £1,500, *tournee* £2,000; then the winter engagement in Paris or Russia, £4,000. Yes, about £10,000 a year."

Grisi did not probably make much less, so that

together they had the more than princely income of £20,000 a year; and yet they both died poor!

At the conclusion of the lucrative Irish *tournée*, the *impresario* came again across Mike, the irrepressible kind-hearted "boots" at Morisson's Hotel, Dublin; and, on being told that the party had had good luck in Cork, Mike said,—

"And so we have here, sor; we've had a moighty big wedding in the house, sor."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the *impresario*.

"It was so indeed, sor, and a pretty expensive one too. Why, sor, the trousers cost £20,000!"

"The trousers, Mike! What kind of trousers could cost £20,000?"

"That's what puzzles me, sor," replied Mike. "I'd never have thought it hadn't I read it with my own eyes in the papers."

The manager was puzzled too; but, upon reflection, he thought he had solved the mystery.

"Are you sure it wasn't *trousseau*, Mike?"

"Faith then," said Mike, scratching his head, "whatever it was, sor, it was written 'trousers,' or something very like it."

The final concerts given in England by the combined Grisi-Mario party were exceedingly successful, and realized goodly sums of money for the parties concerned. The two favourite songs, which

Mario always sang so beautifully, were "Come é gentil," the serenade from *Don Pasquale*; in which Grisi, Lablache, and others used to add a few pianissimo accompanying vocal notes towards the end, behind a screen, the effect being positively electrical upon the audience; and the now famous "Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye," the words of which, Walter Maynard says, Hatton brought to Manchester and read to Mario from a piece of note-paper he took out of his pocket-book.

When the composer had finished reading, Mario immediately repeated, "Good-a-bye, sweetheart," with that pleasant foreign accent which made his singing of the subsequently well-known song so very interesting to his fair admirers.

We were all standing round the pianoforte, and, after a short prelude, Hatton played from memory the music he proposed.

Mario began to try snatches of it. "I could-a-not leave thee—though—*ancora quel* though, I said 'Good-a-bye, sweetheart, good-a-bye.'" We all agreed it would make a decided hit, and it did.

Mario studied the words carefully, until he had completely mastered the difficulties of *th* and had learnt the verses by heart.

"Will you sing it?" asked Hatton.

"Certainly I will, if you do not think my English will be laughed at," replied the modest tenor.

It was then decided that this ballad should be included in the programmes of the concerts to be given during the projected tour. Its success is known to every one. "The difference in the reading of this song by Mario and Sims Reeves," says Maynard, "is remarkable, though both are equally effective. The one sings it with a *suaviter in modo* that might reasonably be supposed would break a fair damsel's heart at such a parting; the other, with a *fortiter in re*, as soul-stirring and vigorous as any kind of sweetheart could possibly desire."

Grisi died in Berlin, in 1869, at the age of fifty-seven; and Mario passed away at Rome, in 1883, aged seventy-one. The Queen sent a special wreath for Mario's grave; and almost the last words he uttered were words of gratitude to her Majesty, and to the English nation generally. *Punch*, of December, 1869, pays an eloquent tribute to Grisi's talents and memory, concluding with the lines:—

" Art's high priestess ! at her shrine
Ne'er was truer guard than thine.
Were it love or were it hate,
It was thine, and it was great.
Glorious woman ! like to thee
We have seen not, nor shall see.

Lost the love, the hate, the mirth,

• • • • •

Light upon thee lie the earth!"

Of Mario, on his demise, the same kindly hand traced in *Punch*, of December 11th, 1883, poetic lines of real strength and beauty, from which, in conclusion, I make the following small extract:—

“Voice of the golden past ! The stage grows dark,
The end has come and slow the curtain falls.
Mario is dead ! It cannot be, for hark !
His name is echoed in repeated calls.
Long we have lost him, but fond memory slips
Back to the days his song so glorified ;
His magic fame falls from a thousand lips—
Music grew dumb the day that Mario died !
Man of the deathless voice ! How they will greet
The lost companion who returns to them !
Rubini and Giuglini, honey-sweet,
Will swell the chorus for your *requiem*.
When the last portals to be passed by men
Are fired with melody, amidst the glow
Songs immortality will triumph, then
Grisi at last will meet her Mario !”

XV.

TITIENS AND GIUGLINI.

THE story of Grisi and Mario, which I told in my last chapter, was of a character, both privately and publicly, likely, I hope, to excite further interest in their lives. To those who may desire other and more extended information, I beg to refer to Walter Maynard's charming book, "The Impresario," in which there is not only much more than my limited space enabled me to give respecting these two great singers, but a large amount of information respecting other celebrated artistes, interesting and amusing as well as useful, is included. Since my sketch of Grisi and Mario was written, some singular revelations have come to light respecting Grisi's first husband, Gerard de Melcy, who was, some long time ago, at the assize court of the Ardennes, France, condemned to a year's imprisonment for forgery and swindling. Melcy was married over fifty years since to Grisi, with whom he lived until 1846, separating from her after his duel with Lord Castle-reagh. Grisi was condemned to give him an annual

allowance of £400, but this engagement was never kept. Melcy went into business, indulging in speculation, until at last he came under the clutches of the criminal law.

Of Titiens and Giuglini, who seem naturally in my "memories" to follow Grisi and Mario, very little has been written; indeed, there is a paucity of information about them; and very little can be obtained from any of the usual sources, not even from that walking dictionary of music and musicians, Mr. Joseph Bennett, the famous art critic and musical historian.

Both Titiens and Giuglini died young in their artistic career. Theresa Caroline Johanna Tietjens was born at Hamburg in 1834, and died in London in 1877. Antonio Giuglini was born in 1826, and died in an asylum in 1865. The lady therefore with whom he was so closely associated in England during his professional career was six years his junior; but Mdlle. Titiens always showed her superiority in wisdom and advice, two things much needed by poor Giuglini. I say "poor Giuglini," quoting the words of the great *prima donna* herself, because he was indeed, both as a man and as an artist, much to be pitied. He possessed a remarkably fine high tenor voice, and could give out his "top B flat" (as the Yorkshire chorus singer naïvely

describes it) with unerring certainty and power. He was a sweet and beautiful singer, but a poor, weak, erring man. Gifted by nature with a voice of great compass and purity, with faultless intonation, and with a delicate, sensitive ear, Giuglini could send forth dulcet and penetrating tones that went direct to the heart; and he reminded one of Keble's lovely and appropriate lines:—

“As for some familiar strain
Untired we ask and ask again,
Ever in its familiar store
Finding a spell unheard before ”

This sweet singer knew nothing of scientific music; he could not even tell you the first inversion of the common chord: and there he was certainly very much like many of the pretentious modern “practical musicians,” who can neither say nor do anything beyond the “lesson they have learnt” from the notes put before them. Giuglini, when a poor boy, sang in the Catholic church choir in his native town, without pay or reward (as is usual); and, when the lad merged into manhood, and his voice “broke,” he entered the chorus of the opera company. One night, the *primo tenore* being taken suddenly ill (in consequence, it was said, and is usually said of public persons, of too free libations), and being totally incapacitated from taking his part in Verdi's

celebrated opera *Rigoletto*, Giuglini, who was then quite unknown as a soloist, offered to take the erring tenor's part; and did so to the intense astonishment and delight of the large audience, as well as of the conductor, band, and chorus. Thus was Giuglini's fortune made. He had been working privately, no doubt, like Dvorák (who is supposed by many to have dropped from heaven with an inspired composing-spoon in his mouth!) Ah! my musical readers, pray do not deceive yourselves; depend upon it, none of these musical or other geniuses spring into existence like a mushroom! No one ever attained excellence or celebrity without much downright hard work and study. Neither Mario nor Giuglini knew much of the science of music, but nevertheless they quietly and studiously learnt the parts they had a love for, and, being gifted with retentive memories, obtained a knowledge of music and acting by closely observing those who *did* know the best tenor rôles in Italian opera.

Giuglini's beautiful voice and singing soon brought its reward. He was offered engagements here, there, and everywhere; but, like most sensible foreigners, he elected to come to England, being persuaded by his companions that—

“The streets are paved with gold,
And wealth is there untold.”

And so he made his appearance at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1875, when he "brought down the house," to make use of a familiar expression, by his voice and singing. As an actor he is not to be named in the same chapter with Mario; but he was good-looking, with black hair, eyebrows, and moustache, sparkling black eyes, and a sweet winning smile that went direct to the hearts of the ladies, especially one fair woman, well known in the then fashionable world, Mrs. W——, who followed the popular tenor wherever he went at home or abroad.

And now let me say something of my dear old noble-hearted friend, Mdlle. Theresa Titiens, who was truly the impersonation of greatness, whether regarded musically or otherwise.

Gifted with a voice and presence of the highest order, possessed of musical intelligence "native and to the manner born," and of the most kindly disposition and generous nature, Titiens was verily a great artiste as well as a delightful woman. In her presence no one could for a moment be anything but pleased. She had the invaluable gift of charming every one with whom she was brought into contact, and the sole object of her life seemed to be that of making all around her cheerful and happy. So much for her personal qualities. But what can I say of her musical talents? Those who heard her

sing, as I did very many times both publicly and privately, need not be told of her matchless skill and marvellous power of voice, and that she was verily a "bright gem instinct with music, a vocal spark," such as we shall rarely hear or see again.

When Titiens came to Leeds to study oratorio singing with me (having been told, she said, that I knew more than her London advisers about that particular branch of art), I heard from her many a tale of her young days and of her musical aspirations. She had often tried to get away from home, before she finally contrived to escape from the custody of her parents, and made her voice heard in the streets and salons of Hamburg. "Not," she once said, "that I complain of leaving home comforts, but only that I must force myself away from all those surroundings among which I had felt myself so sheltered and secure, and from the circumstances and employments which had grown to be a part of my life. I was only fifteen, but I had the strength and wishes of a woman, and had already more than one youthful admirer; my mother, too, was severe, and worked and strove against my aspirations. But I did not care for these—to me then great matters—the supreme joys of most maidens, which fasten on the human heart with such force. Oh, no! I felt that a pitiless fate had

grasped me with an iron hand, the fortune of my life; then a noble self-respect over-mastered the pain of my home bereavement, and I resolved proudly and firmly to be free! Still I hesitated, and I thought that when fate seizes upon one great expectancy after another, and colour after colour fades from the picture of our early days, then a nameless sorrow comes upon us, and I felt my heart shaken within me."

But Titiens left her home unknown to her parents, and wandered about the streets of Hamburg, singing, praying, begging, till at last one good musical soul, a generous Jew, heard her glorious voice, with its compass from G to C in alt, and took her to a *café chantant*, where her talents nightly attracted crowds of admirers, thus proving the power, beauty, and attractiveness of genius, whether high or low born. It was in the opera *Lucretia Borgia* that Titiens made her mark at Hamburg in 1849, her first appearance in England being in 1858 at Her Majesty's Theatre where she took the part of Valentine in *Les Huguenots*, making, by her magnificent singing and acting, her mark at once and for ever, especially on the susceptible minds of the critics and quidnuncs.

In 1863, the great *prima donna* sang in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Hamburg, and obtained a great suc-

cess, though she seems to have been badly supported. A friend of mine (a German musician) wrote me at the time: "Surely you have heard of the *début* of Mdlle. Titiens in *Lucia*, another grand triumph for this great artiste; but, oh dear! how feebly she was supported! It was shocking! The tenor, Signor Amandi, has, if possible, less voice than when he was in England; the baritone had no voice whatever; and the chorus was simply one mass of assassins. The orchestra too did not know how to accompany; it was simply awful; the audience approved only of the *prima donna's* airs, and the rondo created a great sensation. . . . Mdlle. Titiens drives out every day in an open carriage, and calls this her holiday. So it is, for she has only to sing three times a week, and has nothing to study!"

When Titiens was in Leeds (often on Saturdays for the popular concerts), she invariably attended mass on Sundays at St. Ann's, and, like a good Catholic, took part in the music of the service.

She made her last appearance in Leeds, March 17th, 1877, at a concert given on St. Patrick's Day, in aid of the building fund for St. Mary's Cathedral, Richmond Hill; and it was only on one or two other occasions that she appeared in public prior to her fatal illness. The following notice, extracted from the *Yorkshire Post* of March 19th, 1877, will,

I am sure, be read with much interest by all who read these "Musical Memories":—

"IRISH MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

"Saturday being St. Patrick's Day, the festival was celebrated by a concert at the Town Hall, when Mdlle. Titiens and a party from Her Majesty's Opera gave a charming concert. Last year it occurred to the Rev. M. A. Hunt, of St. Mary's, Richmond Hill, that the evening of the festival, might be kept in a better manner than hitherto; and an indifferent concert was given. This year the concert was of the highest order, and we hope the experiment will be justified by the result. A procession of over a thousand young men, chiefly members of the Young Men's Society, headed by their band, walked down to the hall, wearing shamrocks, and among the audience national emblems were numerous. Mdlle. Titiens wore a robe of dark green velvet, and the shamrock with diamonds. She also carried a bouquet of choice exotics with shamrocks, presented to her by Mr. Hunt. The proceeds of the concert, if any, it was understood, would be devoted to benevolent purposes in connexion with the Young Men's Society. After the concert, a torchlight procession escorted Mdlle. Titiens on the way to her hotel. The programme was a well-

selected one and varied, the Italian element not being so much out of proportion as usual. The familiarity of the artistes with their work can easily be accounted for; and it may interest our readers to know that the same programme, with slight alteration, was gone through at the Wentworth Rooms, Peterborough, on Tuesday, and probably has done, and will do, much more good service. The company consisted of Mdles. Titiens, Alwina, Valleria, and Agnes Bonn; Mr. Bentham, Signori del Puente, Procolini, Borella; M. Musin, violinist; and Mr. Cowen, pianist and conductor. Mdle. Titiens made her appearance in Leeds after an absence of more than two years; and anxiety gave place to delight as the audience found that the unrivalled voice had retained its freshness and power. There is therefore no occasion to tell the oft-told tale of the charm our great *prima donna* exercises on an audience, nor of the many times she is recalled and how graciously she responds. It is worth noting, however, and it must have been evident to all but the most superficial observation, how Mdle. Titiens encourages younger artistes, and how, when she is singing with them, she puts herself in the background, as it were, and assumes that the applause is for her colleagues. Perhaps Mdle. Titiens can afford to do this better than most of her predecessors on the operatic stage,

for her successor or rival is not yet known to the musical world. 'Ocean, thou mighty monster!' was a rare treat; but perhaps the 'Minstrel Boy' and 'Kathleen Mavourneen' were more to the taste of the audience, and for this small blame to them. Mdlle. Titiens naturally takes up so much room in a musical notice that small space is left for the other artistes, who, it must be confessed, would have made up a goodly company without her. Mdles. Valleria and Bonn were charming in voice, powers of execution, style, and manner; and both will be very welcome when they appear again in this town. Mr. Bentham decidedly improves upon acquaintance; and the Italian bass, in their various efforts, completed a force of unusual vocal strength. There was, however, another attraction in M. Musin, whose violin discoursed the sweetest music, both in the Austrian national anthem and in popular Irish melodies. Some of the most charming numbers were the concerted vocal pieces, selected with taste and sung with great finish. How beautifully these fine voices blend! Mr. F. H. Cowen, a composer and pianist of some rank, played the accompaniments with great taste and care. For some reason the front seats were not crowded, but at the back the hall seemed to be packed, and the heartiness of the applause proved that the attendance was not a mean

one. Surely a finer concert has not been given there on a Saturday night before. The extract from Beethoven's *Fidelio* was rather above the usual opening piece, and there were many numbers which raised the programme above mediocrity. Next to hearing the 'Last Rose of Summer' sung by Titiens, no greater treat could be enjoyed than hearing it charmingly sung by Mdlle. Valleria. Mdlle. Titiens' visit to Leeds was identified with benevolence in the first instance; and it was characteristic of her that, visiting St. Mary's yesterday, she insisted upon singing several choice pieces to the little orphans."

I have quoted this extract at length, as I feel sure that it will be equally interesting to the reader as it has been to myself, not having seen it for nearly ten years.

Mdlle. Titiens, together with that eminent and clever artist, Herr Staudigl, were my guests in Leeds in 1852. A concert was given in the old Music Hall in Albion Street; and these distinguished performers, with Miss Martha Williams (afterwards Mrs. Charles Lockey), were the principals. It turned out a fearful night; the rain came down in torrents, and the wind howled with a terrible roar. We were all frightened; and still more so when, after the concert, we heard that a horrible disaster

had occurred in Yorkshire. The Holmfirth valley had been inundated by the bursting of a reservoir, which involved the destruction of many lives and of much property. But music came to the rescue; and we became happy, and even merry, after supper, when, on opening the lid of the grand pianoforte, I said, "My dear Staudigl, will you sing me something by either Handel, Mozart, Mendelssohn, or Schubert?" Said Staudigl, "Have you a copy of Mozart's *Il Seraglio*?" "Certainly," I said, running to fetch the valuable volume from my study; "here you are, and let me accompany you." Titiens sat on one side, and Martha Williams on the other, while the famous basso looked over my head at the rather small score. Never can I forget that singing! Staudigl is now remembered as one of the greatest vocalists of the time in which he prospered; Mendelssohn adored him; and every one who knew and heard this great singer praised him to the skies. Madame Clara Novello used to tell how that when Staudigl first sang in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, he excited loud laughter at a private rehearsal by singing in the well-known passage, "I never troubled Israel's *peas*" (peace).

One of the greatest concert attractions we ever had in Leeds was to announce Verdi's "Miserere" from *Il Trovatore*, by Mdlle. Titiens and Signor

Giuglini, and which I had the pleasure of accompanying on the grand organ. After this simple announcement, the Town Hall was usually filled, if not crowded; and the effect of the performance, with Titiens at the front of the orchestra and Giuglini out of sight at the back, always "brought down the house," and sometimes a double *encore* was inevitable.

I must now take my leave of Titiens and Giuglini, two of the greatest vocal artistes the world ever knew; and who, if not quite up to the high standard attained by Grisi and Mario, at least reached an eminence not far short of the highest, and succeeded in securing the plaudits of both critics and people to an extent worthy of the highest encomiums.

XVI.

SIR GEORGE ALEXANDER MACFARREN AND WALTER CECIL MACFARREN.

THE Macfarrens are among the most remarkable musicians of the age; but they are all of them Londoners, and not Scotch, as has been generally supposed. The father, George Macfarren, married Elizabeth Jackson, who was, I believe, the daughter of a Scotchman. There was a family of four sons and two daughters, of whom George is the eldest and Walter the youngest.

John was a clever artist and a talented scene painter, but unfortunately he became blind at the age of twenty-eight; and, his wife being a very clever pianist, she gave pianoforte recitals throughout the length and breadth of the country. The father, George Macfarren, was a literary man of great attainments, and flourished in London in the early part of the century. When Weber's opera, *Oberon*, became so popular, George Macfarren wrote a drama of the same name; he was also the author of many other dramatic works, and wrote the libretto for his

son's famous operas, *Don Quixote* and the *Devil's Opera*. He was a good violin player, and often led the string quartet parties that were held at his house; thus giving the first musical impulse to his afterwards distinguished son, George Alexander. Eventually he became manager of the Queen's Theatre in Tottenham Street.

George Alexander, born March 2nd, 1813, afterwards married Fräulein Andrae, the daughter of a German musician and famous bandmaster, who came to England, and soon got attached to an English regiment. His daughter was educated at the Royal Academy of Music, where she made her mark by her singular and exceptional musical abilities. She translated into English a number of German operas, and for this she received very high commendation, both from the press and from the public.

Sir George studied under his father, also under Charles Lucas and Cipriani Potter, at the Royal Academy of Music, up to 1836. He was shortly afterwards elected a professor; and, in 1875, the University of Cambridge elected him to the honourable position of professor to the University. He was also made Mus.Doc., and Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, which position he honourably held till his death. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1883, much to the satisfaction of his

numerous admirers, not only at the Royal Academy of Music and in London generally, but throughout the country. His first dramatic work, the *Devil's Opera*, in two acts, was produced at the English Opera House in 1838; and from that time he composed a number of grand operas, such as *Robin Hood* and *Helvellyn*; many cantatas, like *Leonore* and *May Day*; symphonies and overtures for full orchestra; chamber music for pianoforte and strings; and a great deal of church music, including services, anthems, etc. Besides this, he is the author of a large number of part songs and detached songs; and, as if all this was not enough to make one man's fame universal, his pen was constantly running in writing scientific works on harmony; an analysis of the symphonies and other works of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Haydn, Handel; and articles of musical biography in the "Imperial Dictionary of Biography," Grove's "Dictionary of Musicians," etc.

Before proceeding further with an account of Sir George Macfarren's labours in England, I may mention that, accompanied by his wife, by Signor Bochsa, and by other celebrated musical celebrities, he went to America in 1847, where his friends soon arranged a concert; and, among other works of his, the sparkling overture to *Chevy Chase* was given with peculiar style and success, the composer him-

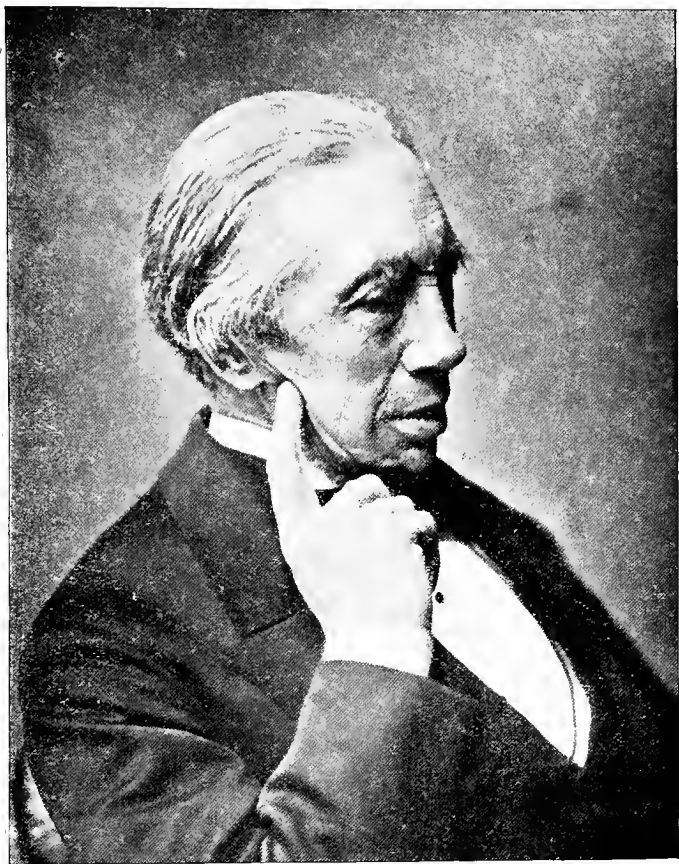
self conducting. The famous Sivori was first violin, Bottesini played the double bass, Henri Herz volunteered to manipulate the side drums, while Hatton (Jack Hatton, as he was always called) revelled in the triangles.

It was in 1860 that he produced his beautiful opera, *Robin Hood* (libretto, by his friend, Mr. Oxenford). It is not often that the opinions of the public and of the critics are unanimous about the merits of any original work; but *Robin Hood* was successful almost without precedent, and was performed through the greater part of the winter, the principal characters of Maid Marion, Robin Hood, and the sheriff of Nottingham, being taken respectively by Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley. I remember very well attending one of the performances, and being greatly impressed with the beauty and power of the whole work; and especially charming was Madame Sherrington's rendering of the song, "True Love! True Love!" and Sims Reeves' well-known song, "My own, my Guiding Star."

One or two of his more celebrated cantatas for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra, must not be allowed to pass unnoticed; I allude more particularly to the *Sleeper Awakened*, *May Day*, and *Christmas*. The most important of these, the *Sleeper*

Awakened, was composed and produced in 1850, at the so-called national concerts, which were given at Her Majesty's Theatre, and managed by a body of noblemen and gentlemen. The libretto (by Mr. John Oxenford) was founded on an incident in the "Arabian Nights"; and, though styled a cantata, was written, Mr. J. W. Davison tells us, "in such a manner as to insure its adaptability for the stage"; but it was never put on the stage, and was only made known to the public through the medium of the concert platform.

Some years later, in August, 1856, another cantata, *May Day*, for which Mr. Oxenford also furnished the poem, was produced with an entirely musical success at the festival held in St. George's Hall, Bradford. I remember its production very well indeed, having been engaged as musical reporter for a Leeds paper during the festival week. The manner in which the spirit of the old English melody was successfully emulated, excited immediate admiration and applause, both from amateurs as well as professors; and its subsequent popularity has been only on a par with its deserts. The cavatina (soprano melody), "Beautiful May," sung by Sherrington, with its bewitching refrain, "Hey, Nonny, Ney," was universally admired and enthusiastically *encored*.



SIR GEORGE ALEXANDER MACFARREN.

After that time, Sir George Macfarren could never transcribe his own compositions, in consequence of his slight misfortune. But there was no falling off in his mental power and activity; he would dictate the full score of a symphony or an oratorio, commencing at the top of the page and gradually working his way to the foot thereof; the whole of the movement having been previously matured in his own mind, and chiselled on the tablet of his tenacious memory.

And now we come to the last point of his musical productions, and not the least important, that of the compositions of his great oratorios, *St. John the Baptist* (Bristol, 1873), the *Resurrection* (Birmingham, 1876), *Joseph* (Leeds, 1877), and *David* (Leeds, 1883). In each and all of these works there is an abundant proof of Macfarren's powerful genius, his command over all the resources of the orchestra—not even omitting Wagnerian “tit-bits”—the varied powers of the voice, both in solo and choral singing, and the judicious, solid, and effective introduction of the organ. All this ability was remarkably displayed in his splendid composition, *Joseph*, which excited the greatest enthusiasm, and was conducted with rare skill, intelligence, and power by his brother Walter. When the final chord had been struck, the orchestra and chorus recalled the vener-

able composer again and again; and he was compelled to go into the Civil Court adjoining the Victoria Hall, to receive cheer after cheer from the members of the chorus, given in true Yorkshire fashion. Poor Sir George was entirely overcome; but he managed to utter a few sentences of heartfelt thanks to Mr. James Broughton, the able, painstaking chorus master, and to the choir; he was then with difficulty driven away with his brother to the house of Mr. Fred. Barr, at Headingley, whose guest he was. The first thing he did on his entrance into the room was to ask for his brother Walter; around whom he threw his arms, and said, "Thanks, dear Walter; thanks! thanks!" and, recovering himself, added with a smile, "and now you may go and steal as much chocolate as you like." This humorous turn had reference to Walter Macfarren's liking for chocolate when a boy, and the peculiar way he had of obtaining it.

Of the production, in 1883, of *David*, which was conducted by Sir Arthur Sullivan, whilst it need scarcely be said that it contained fine writing, especially for the orchestra, it certainly did not produce the same effect and enthusiasm as did *Joseph* at the previous Festival; but then it is not to be expected that all great works should be equally successful, especially on their first production. To tell

the truth, I did not myself hear much of the performance, having been naturally grieved to find that the organ part in the new work of my old friend had been unfairly assigned to the hands of some younger and less experienced organist.

In the musical history of Great Britain, Sir George Macfarren must long occupy a prominent place; and I doubt if any other musician in this country has ever exercised half as much influence for good. The musical culture of the nation has been raised to a very high standard; and doubtless it has been to a large extent by his example and precepts that so much has been obtained, and so great a success reached. His influence and his popularity at the Royal Academy of Music, by which he stood heroically at a most trying period in connection with the Royal College of Music, and in various other ways, have produced the most gratifying results, and have helped to make us what we all feel we can safely say that we are to-day, the most musical nation in the world.

In conclusion, I may mention that, only last year, Sir George displayed his continued industry, and his bright undying intellect, by producing a beautiful cantata for female voices (with accompaniment for pianoforte duet), entitled *Around the Hearth*, the libretto having been written by Mrs. Alexander

Roberts. The argument is short and plain. The simple pleasures of a winter evening by the fireside are described. Song and tale succeed each other, and the three friends, Shiela, Ellen, and Morag, with their guests, express the happiness thus enjoyed. There are eleven numbers—choruses, ballads, trios, etc.,—and all are full of wonderful life and vigour; but the duet with chorus, “Where dwell the Fairies?” might have been written by a musical genius of but eighteen summers, who, like Mozart, could only dream of sunshine, flowers, and song.

But I must not forget his last contribution to the *Organists' Quarterly Journal*, a duet for violin and organ, which consists of a beautiful andante in E major, and a vigorous rondo in E minor, ending deliciously with an adagio in the normal key of E major. As this very clever work is now published separately, I have no doubt it will be extensively performed, wherever an organ or a pedal harmonium and a violin can be made available.

Of Walter Cecil Macfarren, whom I have known intimately for over thirty years, I cannot speak too highly either as a man or as a musician. I will not compare him with his brother George (“comparisons,” as Mrs. Malaprop says, “are odorous”); he can afford to stand independently on his own mound, display his *gaité de cœur*, chirrup and crow,

be as gay as a lark, merry as a grig, *tant mieux!* and yet feel conscious, as many other eminent men have done, that, while he can unbend when work is over, and adjourn from labour to refreshment, he has always done his duty, has never been idle, and has secured the fullest admiration from all the little chickens at the foot of his mound, who are only too anxious to pick up any small crumbs of comfort and encouragement he may throw them.

Walter Macfarren is a man after my own heart; like the late Henry Smart, he is as full of genius and talent "as an egg is of meat." His compositions are at once natural, genial, melodious, and scholarly; especially his beautiful, effective, and most useful pianoforte music, every number of which ought to be in the possession of all young ladies who value their reputation for taste and knowledge in such matters.

Mr. Walter Cecil Macfarren was born (in the same house as his brother, Sir George—in Villiers Street, Strand) on August 28th, 1826, and is therefore thirteen years younger than the knight. He became a chorister in Westminster Abbey, under the late Mr. James Turle, in 1836, and remained in the choir for five years. It was thus that his impressionable mind caught the spirit of good, solid music in his youth, which, as was the case with Haydn, Beethoven,

Mozart, Wesley, Goss, and many other distinguished composers, has never been forgotten, and, like my own chorister days in Exeter Cathedral, left never-dying results—results which could only spring from the joy of youth and health, and the elastic spirits and vigorous frame of a schoolboy.

After studying some years at the Royal Academy of Music, under Holmes, Potter, and his brother, he was elected a professor in 1846, and conductor of the Academy Concerts in 1873. In the meanwhile, the Philharmonic Society elected him successively director and treasurer, two important positions which he filled to the satisfaction of all. And here I may incidentally mention Mr. Macfarren's special gift as a conductor. The mere accurate machine-beating of four in a bar (more or less) does not make a good conductor. The playing of one or more of the orchestral instruments is not sufficient. But it requires that the skilled, successful conductor shall be fully acquainted with the character and details of the work he is directing (of course from the full score), from every gradation of tone and accent, to the varied phrasing of the different parts. This knowledge must be combined with energy, determination, and occasional gentleness, not only in waving the *bâton*, but personally, and above all, with a perfect command of temper. These quali-

ties were all possessed by Mr. Walter Macfarren when he led the Royal Academy band; and they made his presence of infinite value to that excellent body of instrumentalists, as well as to the Royal Academy of Music itself.

Mr. Macfarren is chiefly known as a composer, teacher, and pianist. First, as to his works, they include a full symphony in B flat, five overtures, church music, part-songs, *concert-stück* for pianoforte and orchestra, three sonatas, and about one hundred various detached pieces for the pianoforte, such as tarantellas, pastorales, vales, caprices, gavottes, bourées, etc., besides the standard edition of musical classics. One of his biographers says: "Mr. Walter Macfarren may safely claim a position as a composer of high merit. His part-songs and pianoforte music show that he possesses a most graceful faculty for composition."

In his capacity of teacher he has been remarkably successful, especially in imparting the secret of that silvery, pearly touch which he displays so beautifully in his own pianoforte playing, and which his pupils naturally take a pride in reproducing.

Among the numerous pupils of his who distinguished themselves by fine pianoforte playing at public concerts, etc., was Miss Heathcote, whom he

unfortunately recommended as chief musical teacher at the Leeds Girls' High School, and whose untimely death we all remember too well and too painfully. He spoke to me with deep feeling and emotion on the subject, and stated that her sister was still a student at the Royal Academy of Music.

In the early part of his career he was associated with Sainton and Piatti in giving concerts in London of chamber music, which were attended by large and fashionable audiences, and proved altogether eminently satisfactory. At these performances Mr. Macfarren introduced, not only well-known *chef d'œuvres* by the great masters, both for pianoforte solo and in combination with the violin and violoncello, but many new and interesting manuscript works composed expressly for these concerts by his brother, himself, and most of the writers of "light and leading" then known in the musical world of London.

In August last year it so happened that I was taking my holiday in the Isle of Wight; and, when I arrived at Ventnor, I met my old friend Mr. Walter Macfarren,—who was accompanied by his only sister,—and several other talented musicians who were seeking relaxation from labour, and breathing the pure ozone which blows in from the sea on that exquisitely picturesque coast. Not only

did we enjoy some delightful musical evenings, playing and singing (an accomplished lady vocalist, now Mrs. Charlton Speer, being one of our party), talking and laughing, criticising new music, our own included, winding up with the inevitable siesta in our hospitable host's *sanctum sanctorum*; but some of our friends ventured on politics and religion, and then Macfarren thought it time to say, like Mario, "Good-a-bye! good-a-bye!"

But it was not at these social gatherings that I most enjoyed Mr. Macfarren's society; but in the rambles we took together through the lovely and ever varying scenery which surrounded us on all sides. There was no more favourite walk with us than the road from Ventnor to Bonchurch, passing on our way the natural fountain, the Pulpit Rock, and *looking at*, but not ascending, the hundred and one steps which give the pedestrian a short but by no means easy road to Upper Bonchurch.

One day I asked him to tell me a little about our mutual friend—and the devoted admirer of his brother,—Mr. J. W. Davison, of the *Times*.

"Ah! my dear Spark," he replied, "he was a man and a half; and I only wish his splendid writings, criticisms, and witty sayings could be collected and published in book form. We should then have a literary work of inestimable value; in fact, it would

be priceless. But I have heard that a good biography of him is to be written by Sir George Grove for the supplement he is now preparing of his 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians.' You will remember that at one time Davison and 'Charlie Kenny' were everlastingly chaffing and writing nonsensical rhymes about each other, as well as about their friends. At last they wound up with these two:—

'There was a J. W. D.
Who thought a composer to be,
But his muse would not budge,
So he set up as a judge
O'er better composers than he.—C. K.

There was an old paper called *Punch*,
Which started all follies to crunch !
And it did so no doubt,
Till its teeth all fell out !
Now it mumbles and sips its old punch !
—J. W. D.' "

To summarise, in conclusion, what I have said, or intimated, in the early part of this sketch, the Macfarrens—Sir George and Walter—command our admiration in the highest degree, both as men and as musicians. As men, they have each lived honestly, industriously, honourably, abstemiously, and seem to have practised every moral and social virtue; so that their lives and characters have proved a blessing and a guide to the thousands of students who

have for the last forty years enrolled themselves under their banner. As musicians, they stand in the highest rank, reflecting by their splendid productions the indelible marks of their genius and their scholastic attainments, bringing honour and profit to themselves, and glory to Old England the land of their birth.

XVII.

HENRY SMART.

OF Henry Smart I can only write and speak in terms of personal affection and musical admiration. The man, as well as the musician, was dear to me. His keen intelligence, his quick perception, his generous impulses, his wit, and store of general knowledge, rendered him one of the most genial and valued of companions. And when to these gifts he added the genius and talent of one of the finest composers England has ever produced, it can easily be understood how great has been the gap made by the loss to our art of so bright an example and so able an exponent of music as the late Henry Smart.

This singularly gifted man was born on October 26th, 1813 (the same year as Sir George Macfarren), in Foley Place, London; and he died in King Henry's Road, near Primrose Hill, on Sunday evening, July 6th, 1879.

In 1880, I wrote and published a book entitled, "Henry Smart: his Life and Works"; and it was remarked by the critics, at the time, that "the work

was the first of its kind ever published of an English musician."

In consequence of the large number of musical illustrations from his various voluminous productions, which I found it necessary to introduce in order to show the originality and versatility of his genius, the book was somewhat expensive; and, though the sale has been large, it has naturally been restricted, and is a closed volume to those who are accustomed to buy only shilling biographies or penny tales. In this sketch, therefore, I shall endeavour to give an epitome of his life and works; and to render such other information as may be useful, interesting, and acceptable, to those numerous admirers of Smart and his music, who, for the reason given, have been prevented from reading the fuller and more extensive account of him.

His father and grandfather were both good musicians, and on his mother's side he belonged to one of the oldest and noblest families of England, Mrs. Smart being a lineal descendant of Robin Hood, the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon.

As a boy, Henry Smart was fond of mechanics and new machinery; and, when he could get access to the back of Drury Lane stage (especially when a pantomime was in preparation), his delight knew no bounds. After leaving school—where he was as

mischievous as he was clever—it was a debated point with his parents whether he should be made a lawyer, an engineer, or a musician. Ultimately, he was articled to a solicitor, sorely against his inclination, and then his legal “studies” began. The clients were, “like angels’ visits, few and far between”; and, as both his master and himself were more fond of amusement than of business, the connection was an unfortunate one; and Henry astonished his widowed mother one midday by suddenly appearing and exclaiming, “I took up law to please my relations, and now I’ll leave it to please myself.”

Music was his heart’s delight; he had mastered nearly all Cramer’s studies, could play many of Bach’s forty-eight preludes and fugues, and was happy in improvisation. He had become intimate with George Macfarren and John Barnett; the three friends spent much time together, thoroughly believed in themselves, and studied music with the greatest industry and zeal. About this time, when Henry Smart was seventeen, his popular uncle, Sir George Smart, had arranged for Covent Garden Theatre an opera, entitled *Azor and Zemira*, the music being extracted from more than one of Spohr’s beautiful early works. It was at this theatre he made the acquaintance of Mr. Kearns, the leader, a sterling musician and orchestral writer; and with

him he studied scoring for some time—an accomplishment which Smart in after life brought to the highest degree of finish.

Long before this, he had conceived a love for organs and organ music; especially delightful to him were his visits to the Robsons' celebrated organ manufactory in St. Martin's Lane, where he used to spend much time in examining the mechanism of the organ, and trying the different toned stops, about all of which he would frequently make observations and suggestions which astonished those who heard them, and often proved most useful and valuable. Smart was not quite twenty years of age, when he obtained the appointment of organist and choirmaster at the parish church, Blackburn, in Lancashire; and here, being greatly encouraged by Dr. Whittaker, the vicar, who made him a frequent guest at his table, and quickly found him to be something more than a clever organist, he greatly enjoyed his four or five years' residence, studying harmony and composition and organ playing with unremitting energy and success.

It was at Blackburn, in 1835, that Henry Smart produced his first work of importance, an anthem for the tercentenary commemoration of the Reformation; which, though showing traces of Spohr's influence on the young composer's style, proved to be

a work of much originality and power, and a composition which might now be heard to advantage, though it is all but unknown.

Soon after this, Smart returned to London, having accepted the appointment of organist at St. Philip's, Regent Street; and he also undertook the post of musical critic to the *Atlas*, an admirably managed and widely circulated paper. Here I hope I may be permitted to make an extract from my "Life of Smart," as the passages supply some very interesting facts of the composer's early doings:—

"The appointment was, very probably, a misfortune for him, for Henry Smart (always intolerant of empty pretension and flourishing incapacity) never spared the lash where it was due, and no doubt it often cut pretty severely. He went but little into general society, but renewed his old musical friendships, and always eagerly cultivated the acquaintance of any one from whom knowledge was to be gathered. His duties in connection with the *Atlas*, of course, took him much both to concerts and theatres; and he now, for the first time, became practically familiar with the great symphonies of Beethoven, although he had long known their scores. Mr. Whiting (the editor) was not slow in finding out the wide scope of Smart's knowledge;



HENRY SMART.

From a photo lent by Mr. Blennerhasset.

and, having a great liking also for his terse, vigorous English, proposed that he should contribute a weekly scientific article to his paper. All these various avocations did not save him from the common fate of mortals, and he fell in love. This he did, like most other things, not moderately or by halves, but earnestly, deeply, and seriously. Things did not look promising, for, though he found favour with the lady of his choice, a young and unknown musician was hardly likely to win consent from a prudent father. The course of his true love ran decidedly crooked, and worry and excitement threw poor Henry into a bilious fever, which for some time threatened to shorten his career. His vigorous constitution, however, triumphed; and, after some weeks, the gaunt and wasted musician again occupied the seat at his organ, and resumed his ordinary avocations with all diligence, having now, as he said, something to work for. To this period must probably be assigned the commencement of the opera of *Undine*, on which much time and genius were expended. Smart was never a fast writer, and used to express the most unmitigated contempt for what he called 'the-finish-an-opera-in-a-fortnight' style of music. *Undine* occupied him for some years, and more than three acts of it were completed. Alas! that probably no more remains

of all this fine work than one charming recitative and romance for a soprano voice. But *Undine* was not the fair one who chiefly occupied the young musician's mind; it was set upon a lady less romantically named; and, as there seemed small chance that fate would clear away the obstacles to his happiness, Henry Smart determined to surmount them at a bound, and he was married on July 2nd, 1840. By a curious coincidence, he received his wife's hand in the very church which for so many years resounded to his grand improvisations, and where, for the last time, in 1879, he conducted the musical service. He was appointed organist at St. Luke's Church, Old Street, City, in March, 1844, a position he retained for twenty-one years. After a short interregnum, he was offered and accepted a similar office at St. Pancras', Euston Road. This he held for nearly fourteen years. The appointment at St. Luke's was obtained by competition, the judges being Messrs. Turle, Topliff, and Goss; and the playing was on the organ in Cripplegate church. The other candidates had no idea that Smart would compete; and they were utterly dismayed when he put in an appearance, and buckled on his armour for the fight. Several of them at once took up their music and departed, saying that it was useless to

play against him; indeed, it proved to be a case of 'Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere.'"

He now devoted much of his time to composition, his first important opera, which was given at Drury Lane Theatre, being entitled *Berta, or the Gnome of Hartzburg*. The libretto was written by Mr. E. Fitzball, and the first performance was received with much enthusiasm; the critics were delighted, especially with the charming orchestration, and with the genuine ring of true musicianship pervading every number. Sims Reeves played the part of Michael (the hero), and produced a great effect with the graceful ballad, "In vain I would forget thee"; and Weiss sang another fine song, "Oh, what a happy life!" Doubtless the style of the music generally was above the heads of the audiences; and not a single song became popular, as was expected. Smart was greatly chagrined; and, although he occasionally worked at his two other unfinished operas, the *Siege of Calais* and his first love *Undine*, he never finished either, and generally avoided answering any question on the subject.

Subsequently his great power in other lines—especially in church and organ music, part songs, duets, trios, etc.—soon secured for him both fame and money. He first composed that magnificent

"Morning and Evening Service, together with the Office of the Holy Communion, set to music in the key of F," and dedicated to his friend, Sir John Goss. The *Te Deum* and the *Credo* are simply glorious, both in the conception of the music and the pure and grand harmonies, and in the exact and forcible adaptability of every phrase to the power and beauty of the text. No one with any feeling whatever for music—good music—can listen to a fine performance of this work without being elevated and ennobled thereby; for the manner in which the sublime unison passages are built up, rising chord after chord with rich and flowing accompaniment, which seems as if it would never stop until it reached the gates of heaven itself, is simply magnificent, if not overwhelming.

There is another full service of Smart's, which he wrote for the *Practical Choirmaster*, 1870, of which I was then the editor. It is published in a cheap form, and will be found (not being difficult) a most useful and effective service.

Of his anthems, the chief ones were written for the festivals of the London Church Choir Association, held at St. Paul's Cathedral, in 1876 and 1878. There are several short and full anthems, but the two I have specified are almost like small cantatas in their length and importance.

Great as Henry Smart was in composition, there was no talent which he exhibited to more advantage than in his knowledge, designing, and construction of large organs. When the Leeds Town Hall was approaching its completion, early in the year 1857, the committee having decided to award a prize of £150 for the best instrument, Smart was good enough to associate himself with me in designing a grand organ which should be worthy of the fine position it was to occupy in the Leeds Town Hall. It is impossible to chronicle the enormous difficulties that we had to encounter before the object we had in view could show any chance of realisation; but, when the committee had, with the assistance of disinterested experts, made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the value and ingenuity of the mechanical arrangements, which Smart drew with his own hands, and which remain to this day as an example of his wonderful skill as a draughtsman, the prize was at once awarded to us. It was one of the delights of Smart's after life to visit me annually at Leeds, and to listen, in the quietude and stillness of an evening, when the doors were all closed, to the varied tones of that instrument in the Town Hall, the beauty, variety, and power of which are now universally appreciated.

Of his organ music, which is second only to that

of Bach, and quite equal to that of Mendelssohn, Smart has left innumerable fine examples. His first organ compositions did not attract any very great attention; but afterwards, when I urged him to produce some new pieces, he commenced with that splendid postlude in C, which was pronounced by some of the best German organists, to whom I played it in 1871 in Germany, to be quite worthy of Sebastian Bach or Mendelssohn. It is not too much to affirm that, whether in his graceful andantes, or in his postludes, marches, and larger pieces, Smart has equalled if not surpassed any known writer of modern organ music; and I believe I am right in saying that no organist of the present day, who has any pretension to be a player, is without some of the works of this remarkable composer.

As a performer, Smart was greatly distinguished in his early as well as in his later days by his fine performances of Bach's fugues, and of the best orchestral music adapted to the organ, such as Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, etc.

At the formal opening of the Leeds organ, in the Town Hall, on April 7th, 1859, Smart was in the healthy possession of all his faculties, and could see well with the aid of powerful spectacles. He was in fine form, and played magnificently his two

favourite fugues in C and A minor, by the immortal Sebastian Bach. But it was in his extemporaneous variations on the National Anthem that he astonished his hearers most; and these variations, I may observe, did not include one with the customary scale and arpeggio passages, but were all in due form and proportion—imitative, brilliant, diatonic, chromatic, canonic, choral, and fugal. Smart was greeted with enthusiastic applause at the close, and he said earnestly to me: "Well, thank goodness! the organ is all right up to now; and I tell you what it is, the sooner we get off to Bolton Bridge the better."

He was a great lover of nature, and had a particular fancy for Bolton Woods, from the first moment he beheld them. On the occasion I allude to, he was full of glee and in high spirits. It was early spring; the sun shone out brightly, the air was clear and bracing. In our drive towards Bolton from Ilkley, where the scenery becomes so beautiful and interesting, and the river Wharfe is surrounded by high hills and richly foliaged woods, the poet musician became quite excited with delight, and said:—"Isn't it lovely? What tints of green! What grand trees! What a charming river!" Friends as we were in most matters, we rivalled each other in our love and admiration of nature. Know-

ing, as I do, from the exercise of my little hobby, fly-fishing for trout, almost every nook and corner between Kilnsey and Tadcaster on the river Wharfe, I felt a pardonable pride in being able to indicate the chief points in the scenery to my distinguished friend, who, on his part, was only too ready to acknowledge and appreciate them. Arrived at the famous Devonshire Hotel, where Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were then the attentive host and hostess, we most thoroughly enjoyed a charming little dinner; and afterwards walked out of the French window of the apartment on to the velvet-clad lawn, where there is such a pretty view of the river, of Beamsley Beacon, and of the Bridge. Smart was delighted; he lit up the fragrant weed, sat down on one of the garden seats, and looked, and no doubt felt himself to be, as happy and independent as any monarch on the face of the earth. The scene was certainly one of unusual beauty. The sun was going down, and was shedding his golden light on the opposite woods; the throstle, the linnet, the wren, and the dear little robin, were each in their turn singing their sweet and thrilling evening songs—sometimes alone, and then anon in a grand united chorus of joy and happiness. No wonder the musician then formed such a love of Bolton Bridge, that it became an institution with us to revisit the spot annually;



DR. JOHN PYKE HULLAH.

From Life of John Hullah, by permission of Messrs. Longmans.

and we did so for many years, every Whitsuntide, to celebrate the erection and opening of the grand organ in the Leeds Town Hall.

Perhaps there is no class of composition by which Smart will be more remembered than by those lovely part-songs which are sung and admired by every choral class and society wherever good concerted music can be performed and appreciated. I remember very well the occasion of his first determining to try his hand at these delightful vocal utterances. We had been to one of Professor Hullah's admirable concerts in St. Martin's Hall, where some fine instrumental pieces were relieved by the choir singing some part-songs, by one of the then most popular modern English composers. On these being encored, Smart said, "They are certainly pretty little compositions, but I think I can do better"; and, after he had taken a pinch out of his favourite old snuff box, he said,—“I will write a set of six, one or two of which you shall hear in this very room in about three months, when you come to town again.” At the expiration of that time, true to his word, he wrote to say that two of the first set of six would be sung at St. Martin's Hall on the following day, and he hoped that nothing would prevent me from coming up to hear them. I went, and heard the first performance of *Ave Maria* and the

Shepherd's Farewell, part-songs which are now familiar to almost every choral society in English-speaking countries, and which bear the unmistakable marks of his genius. The beautiful words for his earliest part-songs were written by his favourite sister, and are signed M. E. S.

I have already alluded to Smart's geniality, and to his wonderful powers of conversation. I should have added that he was a tall, powerful, and in his younger days a handsome man; but, when deprived of his sight, he had, like Macfarren, to dictate all his compositions to an amanuensis. Still later, after he had lost his sight but had recovered his wonted vivacious spirits, he would amuse any company with his witty anecdotes and his charming manner of telling them. On one occasion, only three or four years before his death, he had been extemporising beautifully to some friends at my residence, Springfield Villa, Leeds, and other artistes had been contributing good and sweet music, when a young married gentleman, who lisped and stammered, offered to sing Dibdin's song, "Tom Bowling"; this he did in so absurd and childish a style (probably on purpose) that Smart, who had sat down next to some ladies, said to one of them, "Madam, who is that donkey trying to sing 'Tom Bowling'?" when she quickly replied,

"Oh! that is my husband, Mr. Smart." "Well," replied Smart, "he is nevertheless a big fool for all that," and walked away. This is truly characteristic of the man.

I must now bring this "memory" to a conclusion. Henry Smart was granted a pension of £100 a year from the civil list in recognition of his great services to music. But, as in the case of poor Tom Hood, the recognition came "too late," for he only received one quarter's payment!

In June, 1879, his end drew near. The medical men who attended him found that the disease (cancer on the liver) from which he was suffering was absolutely incurable, and that all they could do was to endeavour to alleviate the acute pain he suffered, but of which he never complained. The poor patient grew worse, and ultimately died without a perceptible pang.

He was buried in Hampstead Cemetery, London, on Friday, July 11th, and was followed to the grave by his sorrowing wife (since deceased), his family, and a great many personal friends and eminent musicians, the latter including a deputation from the College of Organists, as well as from Trinity College, and the Royal Academy of Music.

Numerous beautiful wreaths were placed on his coffin by those who loved him; and at the moment

when the mourners were about to leave the grave, the sun, which had been obscured all the day up to that time, burst forth in all his warm and glorious rays, lighting up the scene as with the magic wand of the enchanter. One of his daughters (Clara) was quite overcome. She came up to where I stood, casting a last look into the grave, and with deep emotion said, "Oh! isn't this wonderful?—just what he would have liked himself, the sun bursting out in such a grand light, as if its rays would catch up his spirit and bear it away to the realms above!" This was indeed most touching, and almost more than I could bear.

A thousand thoughts crossed my mind in rapid succession as in a dream. I thought of his wisdom, knowledge, and power; of the many, many delightful hours we had spent in the enjoyment of sweet music and pleasant conversation; of his kind consideration for others, his trials and bodily sufferings, his naturally generous heart, his honesty and straightforwardness, and above all, his faith and wonderful patience; and then the thought flashed across my mind of the resemblance of the sun's rays shining direct on his grave to the scene, the dream in his oratorio *Jacob*, where the angels ascend and descend the ladder to the strains of his heavenly music.

XVIII.

JOHN LIPHOT HATTON.

JOHN LIPHOT HATTON, a composer in the thoroughly English school of music, and one of the most genial and jolliest of men, was born at Liverpool, October 12th, 1809, and died at Margate, at the ripe age of 77. As a writer of songs and part-songs he was eminently successful, and not even Balfe exceeds him in popularity in the former class; to wit, his ever-charming *Good-bye, Sweet-heart, Good-bye!* a melody of undying sweetness and natural sentiment. And in the latter category (part-songs), no English composition of a similiar character has attained greater fame than *When Evening's Twilight*.

When I first made Hatton's acquaintance, he was chiefly engaged as pianist, accompanist, and buffo singer with the leading touring parties of the day (especially one with Grisi and Mario), by the members of which he was highly esteemed. His share in the performances generally consisted of a prelude and fugue by Sebastian Bach, a portion of

one of Beethoven's sonatas (he played nothing but classical music for solos), and, as a far-fetched contrast, he would sing with irresistible humour a very funny song.

In his delightful work, "The Enterprising Impresario," Mr. Walter Maynard says: "'The Sultan' (Hatton's pseudonym) made everybody's sides ache with the *Little Fat Man*, to hear which all his travelling companions rushed to the door leading to the platform, and enjoyed it as much if not more than the public, for they were sensible of the artistic excellence as well as of the facetious character of the performance." At the People's Concerts in the Old Music Hall, Leeds, he would often introduce another song of quite a different calibre, Handel's "O Ruddier than the Cherry," from the beautiful serenata, *Acis and Galatea*, the running accompaniment of which, in the right hand, he would generally play in octaves, and with great ease and fluency. At that time he was in his prime, and was as full of music as he was of fun.

On his professional visits to Leeds I saw much of him, and, need scarcely add, I greatly enjoyed his genial society. It was difficult then to tell his age, but the description given of him ten years after by Mr. Willert Beale ("Walter Maynard") in the

"Enterprising Impresario" is so much to the point that I cannot refrain from quoting it:—

"He was one of those men whose age it is impossible to guess. His bright complexion and clear skin, without the trace of a wrinkle, upset the opinion that his gray hair, which showed itself in curly profusion from underneath his travelling cap, might lead you to form. A luxuriant beard, almost as white as snow, made a handsome outline to his good-looking countenance. He wore spectacles as big as gig-lamps. Yet, notwithstanding gray curls, white beard, and spectacles, I would defy you to tell his age. By some he was called the veteran composer; but looking at him, you would not say the appellation was appropriate, although to conclude that he was a juvenile composer would be equally erroneous."

Hatton came of a musical family; his father and grandfather were both musicians, and in early boyhood he showed considerable talent. He obtained the appointment of organist at Woolton Church, Liverpool, when he was only fourteen years of age. There is a story told that, on his way to the church to be tested, he said to his mother, "I'll play *All Round my Hat* (the popular comic song of the

period) as a voluntary." Though of course well smothered in varied harmony, he actually did play it, and so successfully that he was appointed at once. Subsequently, he occupied a similar position at the Old Church in Chapel Street, Liverpool. His talents were so versatile that he played the part of Blueskin in *Jack Sheppard* at the Little Liver Theatre in Church Street, Liverpool.

In 1832, Hatton went to London, and began to work as a composer and conductor; and his first opera, *Queen of the Thames*, was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre in 1844. Soon after this he went to Vienna, and produced an opera entitled *Pascal Bruno*, which, though much lauded by the Viennese critics, never made its appearance in England. On his return to his native country about 1850, he courted and won public favour under the euphonious *nom de guerre* of "Czapek," which is the Hungarian for "Hat on"; and under this singular name he produced a series of songs of a high-class character, which he never afterwards surpassed. One of these songs, *To Anthea* (words by the fine old poet Herrick), has been sung for many years by our best vocalists, Mr. Santley being among those who gave it frequently with great success, both at metropolitan and at provincial concerts.

Hatton's visit to America in 1848 does not appear

to have been very successful, either in the character of singer or pianist, his performances evidently not being of the sensational stamp desired by the Yankees at that period. He therefore soon returned to London, where he was incited to compose part-songs after listening to the singing of this kind of music by some clever German male vocalists at the house of a friend.

It may here be incidentally remarked that the Germans possess a rich *répertoire* of Liedertafel works, most of their best composers, including Mozart, Weber, Winter, Reichardt, Schulz, Himmel, Marschner, Spohr, Mendelssohn, Müller, Hiller, Zelter, etc., having contributed to this class of composition. They are of a totally different character from our old English glees, which were usually composed for and sung by three, four, or five single voices, and in which the harmony is complete without any instrumental accompaniment. It is possible to multiply the number of singers to each part; but generally this tends to impair the purity of effect—the delicate shading of the composer being sacrificed to the attainment of a volume of sound which we expect in a chorus, where the object sought is usually surprise, or massive volume of harmony. The part-song differs from the glee in this respect: it is evidently constructed with greater breadth of

effect, and admits of a certain amount of rugged force. It is indeed generally of so marked and emphatic a character as to require little previous study on the part of the singers. Neither glee nor part-song having any adventitious aid from the orchestra or the pianoforte, each must rely upon its own completeness of construction, and the suitability of the expression of the poetry, for its success; hence the composer must carefully consider the meaning of the latter, and adapt his musical language to the characteristic sentiment; and, in all the admired popular glees and part-songs, this happy union of the sound and idea is strikingly exemplified.

Hatton was fortunate enough to hit upon a style which, while undoubtedly following in the German wake, possessed a distinctive individuality and a decidedly English character. It is not therefore to be wondered at that such part-songs as *When Evening's Twilight* (the words of which he always said he had written himself), the *Sailor's Song*, *I Know a Maiden Fair to See*, written by Longfellow, appealed at once to the tastes of thousands of singers in Great Britain, especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire, where Hatton was always extremely popular with the choralists, and particularly so when he visited Leeds, and conducted a concert of

his own music, given by the Leeds Madrigal and Motet Society in 1853.

In 1853, Hatton was engaged as director of the music at the Princess' Theatre, London, where, under the management of Charles Kean, there was a brilliant series of Shakesperian revivals, including *Henry VIII.*, the *Merchant of Venice*, *Macbeth*, etc., for which Hatton wrote much excellent original music. It was here, in the ghost scene of the *Cor-sican Brothers*, that Kean is said to have persuaded Hatton, when directing the band, to produce that almost inaudible tremolo with the stringed instruments which, with its weird, mysterious, and almost harrowing effects, has since been continually used in all stage representations, and is known to all musicians, professional and amateur.

It is impossible to estimate the number of songs and ditties of every description which Hatton gave to the musical world. Every kind of song and every class of words, from the sublime to the ridiculous, emanated from his prolific pen. Henry Smart once said, "My friend Hatton has an enviable facility in finding music for everything"; but in any case there can be no question that, as a critic in the *Saturday Review* remarked, "Hatton made himself among English song-writers a place so absolutely his own, that, though he ceased from working

some years before his death, it has been vacant from the first, and is vacant still."

Hatton aspired to much higher things than popular songs, though he does not appear to have composed any work of great length or importance that has made a lasting impression. The cantata *Robin Hood*, produced at the Bradford Musical Festival in 1856, is one of his best compositions; the theme seemed exactly suited to his geniality and *bon-homie*; and it exhibits throughout a spontaneous if not an elevated melodic expression thoroughly characteristic of the man and his life. The composer was recalled; and Hatton expressed to a few friends his great satisfaction and delight with the excellent rendition *Robin Hood* had received from all the performers, especially (as he put it) by the "grand Bradford Festival Chorus." His anthems, services, and church music generally, are certainly not of that high, elevated, ecclesiastical character which he seemed so much to admire in others, especially in the works of Gibbons, Purcell, Croft, Wesley, etc. His sacred cantata *Hezekiah* was brought out at the Crystal Palace in 1877, but was not performed a second time.

When he had almost ceased composing, he was employed a great deal by some of the leading publishers in editing works. Especially successful was

he in this line with the "Songs of England," "Humorous Songs," "English Ballad Operas," etc., work that gave him great pleasure, for he always loved old English music.

Hatton seldom taught music, but on one occasion he was induced to give two young ladies, daughters of a friend, pianoforte lessons, at a school in the neighbourhood of London. He could only attend towards evening after dinner; and on the very first occasion of his visit, in the middle of the inaugural lesson, he fell so fast asleep, that the schoolmistress thought it best to leave him to himself, and he awoke only in time to see all the inmates of the house retire to their rest. He never went again.

It has been said that he elevated eating almost to the dignity of a fine art; and Beale records how on tour he would undertake to order all meals for the party, and how well he discharged his pleasant duty.

For some years he lived in Germany, chiefly at the quiet little town of Würtemberg, where he enjoyed the simple round of German life, which, as one of his biographers says, "suited his pocket, and relieved him of English expenses." He resided for many years at Margate; but for a short time occupied a small cottage facing the sea at Aldeburgh, a quaint village on the Suffolk coast, where there

was a flagstaff in the garden, and my lord hoisted the union jack when at home, and pulled it down when he went to London.

The composer of the ever-favourite song, *Kathleen Mavourneen*, Mr. F. Nicholls Crouch, has written some most interesting recollections of his friend and contemporary, from which I extract the following :—

“Hatton’s whole physique was born of comicality. He was the best buffo singer on the stage, and in low comedy was not surpassed by Wright, Buckstone, Harley, or the incomparable Paul Bedford. I have seen Hatton and George Stansbury play the two brigands in *Fra Diavolo* with such irresistible humour, that they kept the audience in a continual roar of laughter, and were compelled to repeat the scene again and again. The gist of their acting was essentially low comedy; and, though Hatton was a man gifted with extraordinary perceptions of the classic musically, he never aspired to the higher walks of the lyric drama, though eminently qualified to perform any character in the opera or drama. He would extemporise on any school, and was the first pianist to draw public attention to the beauties of Pergolesi, Palestrina, Boccherini, Matthew Locke, and Sebastian Bach; and added to this remarkable power of retention was his unsurpassed knowledge

of the madrigalian and glee writers, which gave him his facility in writing part-songs, and in the herculean labour of editing all Boosey's editions of the operas, and Chappell's madrigals and glees. He was a walking lexicon in himself; and more information could be gleaned from a half-hour's conversation with John L. Hatton than could be learned in a month from books. The glee and madrigal was his existence. Not a turn, cadence, or phrase escaped his notice, and with each of the characteristics of the writers he was as familiarly acquainted as with his native language. As a boon companion he was the quintessence of humour and jollity, and at a masonic gathering he would extemporise after the John Parry style, to the delight of the brethren, until the hours waned into midnight. He was a member, like myself, of the Omnibus Club, held at Dunn's, in the Quadrant, Regent Street, where we met nightly after the theatres closed."

Crouch's statement with reference to some distinguished composers must be received *cum grano salis*.

There can be no doubt that Hatton possessed natural musical talent of a very high order, his earlier compositions especially displaying much genius; and it has therefore been a matter of surprise to his friends that he did not produce a suc-

cessful work containing the elements of vitality and longevity. There are two reasons for this: first, Hatton was almost a self-taught man; and secondly, he was naturally of an indolent nature, and wrote only what emanated from his brain and heart at the moment, without bestowing the pains, care, and scholastic knowledge which other musicians have found it necessary to give to their numerous compositions.

One of his friends says: "Hatton's merry, contented nature is reflected in his music. He had no ambition, and, having formed his style upon the model of fifty years ago, cared not to alter it. Music is to some men philosophy and logic, to others religion and æstheticism; to Hatton it was friendship and jollity."

As a popular composer of a certain class of music which appeals to thousands who do not dive deep into the well of art, Hatton undoubtedly stands in the first rank, and ought to be respected as one whose influence in his particular walk was widespread and powerful; and there can be no doubt that he will ever be regarded by thousands of music-loving people with affection and admiration.

XIX.

MADAME ADELINA PATTI.

IT was my intention to have given, in this chapter, sketches of three of the several eminent *prime donne* I have known; but, on considering the matter, I found there was so much that was deeply interesting in the life and career of the charming singer and actress, Madame Adelina Patti, as to make it undesirable to associate her with any other vocal stars, and I therefore propose to devote this sketch to Patti alone.

Those who heard her when she appeared in the Coliseum at Leeds, and who had not enjoyed that privilege before, admitted that they could not wonder at the world-wide reputation such a singer possessed, with a voice of such marvellous beauty, compass, and power. It is not only in the rich and lovely vocal organ she possesses—fuller and stronger than ever—but she is altogether so fascinating and “beautiful beyond compare,” with dark black eyes that always sparkled like diamonds, and sparkle now, that her grace of manner, and her sweetness

of speech and address, captivate every one who is brought in contact with her.

Looking at and listening to her the other day, I could scarcely persuade myself that it is nearly thirty years since I was first introduced to her—the day after she took the part Amina, in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, when she created so profound an impression, and so decided a *furor*, by the genius and originality she developed in her impersonation of the part.

The story of her birth and career, as given to Queen Isabella, when she first visited Madrid professionally, in the presence of her father, to whom she was much attached, is so exceedingly interesting, that I cannot do better than give it here:—

“In the year 1843, my parents, the Italian singers, Signor Patti and Signora Patti-Barili, arrived in Madrid to perform a series of starring parts. My mother, who had retained the name of her first husband, was Roman, and one of the most celebrated singers of her time. On February 18th they both appeared in the opera of *Norma*, one of my mother's most successful parts. Scarcely had they returned from the theatre to the hotel, than she whispered to her delighted husband, ‘I am a mother,’ words which, a few hours before, were Norma's last con-

fession to her father, the arch-druid. The infant who saw the light on the morning of February 19th was myself. Three weeks later, my parents returned, with my brother Carlo, my sisters, Amalia and Carlotta, and myself, to Italy, where we remained for three years. My father placed my two elder sisters in a boarding school at Milan, and departed with my mother and the younger ones for New York, where I remained till I was sixteen.

"The necessity of providing for a numerous family obliged my father to turn my talents early to account. From my seventh to my tenth year I travelled as a little prodigy with him all through South America. The well-known pianist, Gottschalk, took part for several years in our concerts. At that time I already sang the leading opera airs, and conquered the most difficult passages, containing prolonged shakes and *staccati*, with the greatest ease. My first teacher was a French lady; then I studied with my step-brother, Barili, who was a celebrated baritone. My mother wanted to send me, when quite a child, to Italy, that I might take an engagement there. But when the project came to the knowledge of Maurice Strakosch, the theatre manager at New York, he protested against it most decidedly. As a true *connoisseur*, and still more as the husband of my sister, Amalia, who was then a

favourite soprano and balled singer in America, Strakosch had a right to object, and his expostulations decided my artistic career in the future.

"My voice began already to tremble; and it would have been ruined if I had followed my mother's wishes and sung for a season in Italy. For two whole years Strakosch did not allow me to utter a note; then he made me study a few parts with him, after having steadied my voice by some quiet scales. He made me reappear in my sixteenth year, under the direction of himself and Ullmann, in the Academy of Music at New York, as Lucia. My brother-in-law had great difficulty in obtaining Ullmann's consent to my taking the leading part, for he said 'the little thing,' as he contemptuously called me, 'would scarcely be seen, and still less heard, on the large stage.' The favour with which the public received me taught my severe manager better; and I think I may say, without appearing conceited, to your Majesty, that Herr Ullman had reason to be satisfied with me and my performance.

"From New York I travelled with Strakosch, as well as my father and sister, to New Orleans, where I sang as Valentine for the first time in French.

"'And no doubt you had to repeat the part very often?' questioned the queen.

"'No doubt, your Majesty, if things had gone

according to the manager's wishes; but I was obstinate,' said Adelina roguishly, 'and what I wished must be.'

"The queen laughed heartily at this remark.

"'My daughter, your Majesty, followed her own will as usual,' remarked her father.

"'How was that? You must tell me, Signor Patti.'

"'Adelina took it into her head, after Valentine, to sing the *Traviata*, a part she had not yet studied. We thought this a piece of unheard of presumption, especially as, the orchestra having been overworked, no rehearsal had taken place. But all our remonstrance proved of no avail; my little girl remained firm, and we had to give in. Three days later Adelina sang the *Traviata*, after a slight rehearsal with the pianoforte. In a state of great apprehension I and my family repaired to the theatre; but, when a storm of acclamations reached our ears, when we saw our child bowing her thanks amidst a carpet of flowers, then, your Majesty, we could restrain ourselves no longer. With tears of joy we took Adelina in our arms, and my son-in-law, Strakosch, greeted her with the exclamation, 'You must be a witch!'

"The queen, who had listened very attentively, rose and said to Adelina: 'I congratulate you most

sincerely on your brilliant successes, and I hope often to witness a continuance of them. Your account has interested me greatly, for now I can justly call you my dear countrywoman, of whom I am proud !'

"Adelina and her father were then graciously dismissed by the queen."

Patti, like most other geniuses, has always possessed a most tenacious memory ; in truth, she seems to forget nothing, and even in ordinary everyday life she will recall little incidents which occurred twenty years ago. This gift may account for her being able to sing all the principal Italian operas in four or five different languages. Her *répertoire* is so extensive that she can take the heroine's character in no less than thirty operas, including those parts she herself created, such as Annetta, Esmeralda, Gelmina, Juliet, La Catarina, Aida, and Estella. The only classical opera she has taken part in was *Don Juan*, playing the part of Zerlina to perfection.

This astonishing *prima donna* has performed in nearly every part of the civilized world with equal success ; she has never failed, excepting on one or two occasions, when in Russia, a sudden hoarseness came on, and then she was compelled to rest from

her incessant work, and, urged by her medical advisers (generally a homœopathic doctor), to breathe milder and more congenial air farther south.

Nowhere has she been more popular than in St. Petersburg, where she was literally worshipped by hundreds, nay, thousands, of music-loving Russians. One who was with her on one of her last visits, says: "Having been a witness of Adelina's many triumphs, of outbursts of enthusiasm bordering on madness, I did not think that greater demonstrations were possible. I was profoundly mistaken however, for the St. Petersburg public far surpassed anything I had ever seen before. On Adelina's night most extraordinary profits were made by the tickets. Places in the gallery were sold for ten roubles each, whilst stalls were quickly disposed of for a hundred roubles each. The emperor and empress, with the whole court, took part in the brilliant reception accorded to Patti. Flowers, to the amount of six thousand roubles, were thrown at her. . . . This large sum, as we heard afterwards, came from a collection made principally in the Jockey Club by Generals Wrangel, Tolston, and Zimmerman. The idea was first to present the *prima donna* with a present. As however this plan was given up, chiefly out of consideration for the Marquis de Caux (who was then her husband), it was agreed that the

money should be devoted to purchasing flowers. The six thousand roubles were the more quickly transmuted into blossoms, as one single camellia cost four roubles. On that night Adelina was called before the curtain no less than forty times, and at last sank into my arms quite exhausted. After the performance, an immense crowd, uttering loud hurrahs, surrounded the carriage, and we were truly thankful when we reached the hotel in safety."

During the palmy days of Italian opera, Patti was seldom absent a season from Covent Garden Theatre; it was generally on the "off nights" that I had, at the invitation of Maurice Strakosch, an opportunity of dining with the family party (sometimes strengthened by two or three influential critics) at their charming house, "Rossini Villa," in Clapham Park. These were indeed delightful times, which I cannot easily forget, Adelina being then in the zenith of her fame and powers; and yet, to all intents and purposes, she was as good and guileless as she was graceful and beautiful. The time came, however, when that little rogue Cupid fluttered round her heart, and her love disappointments, joys, and sorrows asserted in turn their right to be known. Well, Adelina has had her delights and also her sorrows; but let us fervently hope that she will now

have nearly done with the latter, and daily rejoice in a large participation of the former.

Not alone in opera and dramatic music is Patti great, her singing in oratorios, and other sacred music, being one of her richest attractions. In 1864, I attended the Birmingham Festival chiefly for the purpose of hearing Costa's new oratorio, *Naaman*, and Patti sing the part of Adah, which she did to perfection, earning the unstinted admiration of the composer and conductor (Costa), as well as the applause of the critics; and, best of all, as she said afterwards, the sincere and hearty congratulations of no less an artist than Jenny Lind, who had never before heard Patti in any important sacred composition. Nothing could exceed the beauty and artistic finish of her singing at the famed Handel Festivals of 1865, 1877, and 1880. It was thought at first that the solid music of the sturdy old Saxon, whose imperishable *Messiah* will live for ever, would be too "heavy" for her; but, whether in the varied bravura style of "From mighty kings" (*Judas Maccabæus*), or in the more expressive, devotional style of "I know that my Redeemer liveth," Adelina Patti proved herself to be a vocal star of the first magnitude.

It was during one of her visits to Leeds that she sang in the Town Hall, with remarkable brilliancy

and effect, "Let the bright Seraphim," from Handel's oratorio *Samson*, accompanied on the organ, of which instrument she is especially fond, there being a good specimen in her delightful "home, sweet home," Craig-y-nos Castle, South Wales.

During her visits to Paris she was idolized by all the musicians who could get an introduction to her, but by none more than by the three distinguished composers, Auber, Rossini, and Meyerbeer. The first-named gentleman—the composer *par excellence* in the French school—used to go out to evening parties at the age of eighty; not to one only, but to several on the same night! Though he was generally full of *bon mots*, yet he was sometimes absent-minded; and on one occasion at Patti's he forgot entirely to sit down; and when at last, at three o'clock in the morning, he was invited to take a chair, he replied: "But, dear child, I am not at all tired!" On another occasion, after she had been singing charmingly in Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale*, Auber offered her a bouquet of roses from Normandy, and in answer to her question about her new diamond studs, said: "The diamonds you wear are beautiful, but those you place in our ears are a thousand times better."

But the story which her companion tells of her assistance to Sarah Bernhardt is still better, and

may be thus explained. On her arrival in Paris in the autumn of 1869, Adelina Patti was urged by journalists and others to assist at a benefit concert on behalf of an "obscure actress," one Sarah Bernhardt, who had, by a fire, lost all her goods and possessions. After some difficulty in getting the Marquis de Caux to consent, she sang on November 5th (which we all remember) in the Odéon Theatre; and after the performance a female, "clad in a black woollen gown, timidly approached the great singer, and offered her a small bouquet; and, being too shy to utter a word of thanks, she kissed her hand." "Who," she adds, "could have guessed that so insignificant a girl would develop into the famous Sarah Bernhardt of to-day, and astonish the world by her acting and her quarrels?"

Perhaps there was not one of the eminent musicians whom Patti delighted more to see and entertain than the composer of *Guillaume Tell*, *Il Barbière*, and, her favourite sacred work, *Stabat Mater*. And Adelina too was pleased to visit Rossini in his own beautiful villa at Passy, which became the centre of great musical, literary, and artistic circles. He was the *beau idéal* of a *bon vivant*, and never denied himself any of the good things of this world upon which he had set his mind. Up to his last illness, he was full of life, acute intelligence, and

melodious music; he could not bear the "music-of-the-future" school; and he made no secret of his dislike to the anti-vocal element in modern music, or of the pleasure he felt when "the Jews had finished their Sabbath." Patti's views exactly coincided with those of this great master; and, when he died, on November 13th, 1868, at the ripe age of seventy-six, her sorrow was deep and poignant.

She would not forego the melancholy pleasure—her companion wrote from Paris—of paying a last tribute of respect and gratitude to so great a man, who had loved her as his own child. The obsequies took place in the Church of the Holy Trinity; and all the singers of the Grand Opera, as well as those belonging to the Italian Opera, showed their veneration for his immortal genius by taking part in a performance of his *Stabat Mater*. The ceremony thus arranged by the Parisians to do honour to Rossini's memory was very grand; and when Alboni and Patti sang the Divine duet, *Quis est homo*, people were so overcome by the pathos and feeling they evinced, that loud sobs were vibrating everywhere, and there was not a dry eye in the church.

Let us all hope that Patti's present usual robust health and bright spirits may be preserved to her for many years to come; and, as her lovely, rich, sympathetic voice and singing moves the heart and

awakens sincere and good feelings, as well as unlimited admiration, that she may again and again delight mankind, and receive the grateful thanks not only of those among whom she now lives and does so much good, but of all and every one who can appreciate the virtues and talents of the great artist whom I have had the great pleasure to include among my "Musical Memories."

XX.

DR. EDWARD JOHN HOPKINS.

As organist at the Temple Church, London, Dr. Hopkins has obtained a world-wide celebrity, not only as a performer on the grandest of all keyed instruments, but as a composer of anthems, services, hymn tunes, chants, voluntaries, etc., which, from their high character and intrinsic value, will last as long as the musical art itself. Every one knows, who has visited the metropolis for the first time, and desires to learn what are the chief attractions in the richest and greatest city of the world, that one of the principal objects to which attention should be directed is the musical service at the Temple Church, an ancient and unique specimen of ecclesiastical faith-wrought architecture not easily to be found in any other part of the world.

Here undoubtedly Dr. Hopkins is the *genius loci*. Whether we are listening to the sweet, devotional, extemporized, and well-developed strains of the opening voluntary; to the dulcet tones and distinct word articulation of the choristers in the psalms and

canticles; to the fine voices and cultivated singing of the choirmen; or to the artistic expression and finish imparted to all the beautiful music performed in that sacred edifice,—we must feel sure that some master mind and directing hand have there been constantly and fervently at work.

The genial current of Dr. Hopkins' musical soul flows on incessantly, and fills all those with whom it comes in contact with animation, delight, and power. But this admirable musician,* like many others who are now taking their steps down the ladder of life, cannot with the streamlet "go on for ever"; he has borne the burden and heat of the day, and has been a hard-working, conscientious organist for more than fifty years. His powers, however, have not deteriorated; he still plays, writes, and teaches as well as he did thirty years ago; and long may he continue to enjoy health and strength to enable him to fulfil to the utmost the noble work he has been appointed to perform.

Edward John Hopkins was born in Westminster, June 30th, 1818. At the Chapel Royal, St. James', under Mr. William Hawes, he was admitted one of the "children" at the age of eight years; and, when his voice broke in 1833, he became a pupil of Forbes

* Now deceased.

Walmsley, the talented organist of St. Martin's-in-the Fields, father of the distinguished Cambridge professor, Thomas Attwood Walmsley. After competition before experienced professional musicians (the usual proper practice in former days), Hopkins was elected successively organist at Mitcham Church, Surrey (1834); at St. Peter's, Islington (1838); and at St. Luke's Church, Berwick Street (1841). In 1843, after probationary service for some months, he was unanimously appointed "organist to the Honourable Societies of the Temple" by the treasurers and benchers of those two ancient inns.

In the production of anthem music, Dr. Hopkins stands well and nobly to the front, deserving, indeed, to take a place by the side of Sebastian Wesley and Henry Smart, with both of whom he was on intimate terms of friendship. His first published anthem, *Out of the Deep*, obtained the Gresham gold medal in 1838; and two years afterwards he secured a similar prize for his anthem, *God is gone up with a Merry Noise*, the judges being Dr. Crotch, Mr. Horsley, and Sir John Goss. The style of these works savoured very much of the old standard ecclesiastical composers; indeed, it would have been considered heresy to deviate at that time from the well-worn though often dignified and sublime manner of Farrant, Morley, Orlando and

Christopher Gibbons, Wise, Croft, Weldon, Boyce, etc., with the greater part of whose works Edward Hopkins was perfectly familiar from his childhood, having joined in the singing thereof during his choristership at the Chapel Royal. Afterwards, he launched out into a more modern style, the first intimation of this being given in his beautiful anthem, *I will Wash my Hands in Innocency, and so will I Go to Thine Altar*—a work often, for brevity's sake, put down in cathedral and other choir service lists as *I will wash* Hopkins.

For beauty of vocal writing, as well as for elegant and effective independent organ accompaniments, his later works, such as, *The King shall Rejoice* (written for the occasion of the marriage of the Prince of Wales in 1863), *God, who commandest the Light to Shine* (1872, for the recovery of the Prince), *Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the Heavens, I will give Thanks*, and several others, are among the finest and best. Then there are two favourite services, known in almost all "quires and places where they sing" as *Hopkins in F* and the other in *A*, the first being remarkable for some extremely clever six-part vocal writing in the *Gloria Patri*.

His organ pieces are characterized by the same elegant and graceful style as his vocal productions, resembling very much his improvisations, especially

those entitled, *Three Short Pieces, intended as Introductory Voluntaries*, and an *Adagio Cantabile* in D. Dr. Hopkins has been a noted solo-organist for a great number of years, his execution being brilliant, his taste and touch unsurpassed. He was one of the first to make "Arrangements for the Organ from the Works of the Great Masters," with pedal obligato, these masterly productions of his pen having been followed up by other organists, good, bad, and indifferent, almost to repletion, if not *usque ad nauseam*.

Probably this eminent organist will be better known hereafter by the work first published in 1855, entitled, "The Organ: its History and Construction," in which he was assisted, in the historical part of the subject, by his friend, the late Dr. Rimbault. It is impossible to calculate the amount of time he spent over this standard work, or to over-value the diligence, genius, and research he brought to bear on the subject. Suffice it to say that, like his own history of the instrument, which appeared in Sir George Grove's "Dictionary of Music" in 1880, it may be best described in the words of Sir George Macfarren, at the "Hopkins Jubilee Presentation and Banquet," which I had the pleasure to attend in November, 1884. "Dr. Hopkins," said Sir George, "had not only unfolded the story of the

organ during a period of over 2,000 years, but he had made known what might be called the physiology of the instrument."

It may here be mentioned that Dr. Hopkins was associated with Dr. Gauntlett and Henry Smart in reducing the compass of the old GG organ to the CC, now universally adopted, as in the instruments played, built, and approved of by Sebastian Bach and the great German builders, nearly two centuries before the system was adopted in England. Great controversy arose among the organists in England over this innovation, and among the opponents of the proper system—now used was no less a person than Samuel Sebastian Wesley. But he, like many other distinguished men, who suggested every conceivable compass except the one which had been devised by others, gave in at the last, and had to acknowledge the justice and mathematical accuracy of the principles so long, strongly, and successfully advocated by Smart, Gauntlett, and Hopkins.

During the heat of the battle about the G and C organs, Hopkins was besieged at his residence in London by organists anxious "to have it out with him." I well remember calling on him in the early stages of the campaign and, after having been shown into a room, his wife came, and, in rather an anxious tone of voice, inquired "if I was a C or G

man." I quickly replied, "Madam, I am not a sailor; but I am nevertheless an enthusiastic C-man." "Oh!" she replied, "I am delighted to hear that, for we are heartily tired of the controversy; and I am sure my husband will be delighted to see you." I need not add that a very pleasant and interesting conversation ensued with the famous organist, and that in response to my invitation he promised to come and visit me, that we might have still further confabs on a subject in which we were both so deeply interested.

In editorial work, Dr. Hopkins has rendered invaluable service, chiefly in the cause of Church music. He issued in 1874 "Single Chants, with additional Harmonies for Unison Use," with a clever historical introduction. The work was referred to favourably at the Church Congress of 1884. In 1877 he overlooked the musical portion of the "Wesleyan Methodist New Hymn-Book"; in 1881 he did similar work for the "Hymnal of the Presbyterian Church in Canada," and the next year for the "Free Church of Scotland Hymn-Book"; and in 1883 he revised the music of the "New Hymn-Book of the Presbyterian Church of England." But by far the most important publication in this respect was "The Temple Church Choral Service Book," consisting of responses in their ferial

and festival forms, the canticles pointed, appropriate psalter chants, congregational settings of the responses to the commandments, and psalms and hymns, with their tunes.

The historical preface contains much valuable information, from which the following extracts will be read with much interest by those whom they may concern :—

“In 1867 the following volume of choral and congregational music was prepared and published at the suggestion, and with the sanction, of the then treasurers of the two honourable societies of the Inner and Middle Temple, the late Right Hon. T. E. Headlam and the Right Hon. Sir Lawrence Peel. The book contained (1) the ferial and festival responses to the order of morning and evening prayer, with the ancient plain-song for the first time restored; (2) a selection of appropriate chants for the daily psalms, etc.; and (3) tunes to the metrical psalms and hymns, together with the latter, as used in the Temple Church.

“The copies of the volume in question, provided for the Temple Church, after thirteen years’ use, having become for the most part worn out, permission was given by the present treasurers, Mr. James Redfoord Bulwer, Q.C., and Mr. Clement Milward,

Q.C., for a new edition to be prepared in larger type, including the 'Short Supplement,' which had subsequently been printed, together with a few additional well-known hymns. The canticles pointed for chanting, with appropriate music, have also been inserted, as some of these are sung occasionally in the Temple Church; and some simple settings of the responses to the commandments, without repetition of words, have likewise been supplied, to enable the congregation to join in the musical forms of those petitions more generally, and with more uniformity, than heretofore.

"Respecting some of these several contents, a few words may be said. The ferial responses are founded on a series of simple and impressive melodies, to which the liturgy of the Church of England has been recited from the earliest days of the liturgy itself. The origin of these melodies does not date back simply to the period of the Reformation; they are an adaptation, to the English service, of intonations that had been in use in the Church in England from time immemorial. These venerable response tones present, in their construction, a development of the primitive monotone, conducted with so much judgment and art, and productive in result of an effect so expressive, appropriate, and satisfactory, that when Tallis, twenty

years after their adaptation to the preces and responses of the Prayer-Book, and nearly thirty years after their alliance with the English litany, proceeded to write his 'Festival Responses,' he did not materially alter, still less recast them, but simply increased their force and truthfulness by the addition thereto of harmonies correspondingly intelligible, sympathetic, and devotional."

With regard to the ancient ecclesiastical melodies, he says :—

"What the character of the music might have been that was sung in the public service of the early British Church, previous to the arrival of St. Augustine, and which the Britons seem to have been so unwilling to relinquish when driven up to the mountains of Wales by the Saxons, it would probably be scarcely possible now to ascertain."

The author goes on to explain the first attempts to clothe the plain chant in harmony—most interesting remarks, but which are too long to be quoted here; then follows a notice of Gregorian, single, double, and the quadruple chant. But the book is altogether so valuable, both from a musical and a literary point of view, that no organist, choirmaster,

clergyman, or musical layman interested in this indispensable branch of public worship, should be without a copy.

In a paper read before the National Society of Professional Musicians at Clifton, on October 15th, 1886, entitled, "Professional and Personal Recollections, with Reflections," Dr. Hopkins gave an interesting account of his own experiences, from which I will here make one or two extracts:—

"At St. Paul's Cathedral, fifty years ago, it was no uncommon thing for the organist to be absent from eleven out of the fourteen services held every week, his place of course being supplied by a deputy. Nor was it by any means a rare exhibition for two or three of the vicars-choral to be late in their attendance at service. They would sometimes arrive just before the commencement of the psalms, and would sidle their way into their places, buttoning on their surplices at the collar as they proceeded; occasionally they would be away altogether. A professional friend of mine from the country, on the occasion of his first visit to London, went to the metropolitan cathedral, on which occasion there was not one tenor singer in attendance, and all the 'amens' throughout the service were closed with a bare fifth and octave and no third.



DR. E. J. HOPKINS.

From a Photograph by W. J. Wright, Upper Norwood.

“At Westminster Abbey, the daily services were, generally speaking, rendered in a much better manner, one of the reasons being that Mr. Turle, the organist, was, as a rule, always in personal attendance. But there was one very curious custom that prevailed there. On a Sunday morning, after the singing of the Nicene Creed, and before the sermon, most of the vicars-choral would leave the choir, and go off to sing elsewhere, leaving the harmonies to the ‘amens’ in the concluding portion of the service to be supported as chance might permit. Such laxities and irregularities have long since been put an end to, we are all thankful to know; and my next few reminiscences are therefore left to assume a more cheerful and lively tone.

“An amusing anecdote respecting a former Chapel Royal organist may, I think, here be related. Rather over forty years ago, my brother John, of Rochester Cathedral, was deputy to Mr. John B. Sale, one of the organists at St. James’ Chapel Royal, and a performer of quite the old school; that is to say, he was a manual player only. On one Sunday evening, just after my brother had commenced accompanying the psalms, Sale walked into the organ loft, and at their close said, ‘I have been watching your feet while you have been playing, and they seem to me always to go down on the right pedals

easily enough. It is true I have never before tried to touch the pedals; but *I* will play the next thing, and I will try what *I* can do with them.' It was, of course, my brother's duty to make way for his senior, and Sale mounted the seat; at the same time my brother, for a few moments, quite trembled for the *fiasco* that seemed so imminent. He then hit upon a little device—and it was really very kind of him to do so—which he at once carried into effect. He placed himself behind Sale, and, while directing his attention to something connected with the stops on the left-hand side of the manuals, he passed his right arm round Sale, and put in the 'pedal pipes' and all the pedal couplers which were on the right-hand side, so that the pedals might be perfectly dumb. The first lesson being over, Sale played away, and exerted himself on the pedals in the surprising manner that a stout, middle-aged gentleman might be expected to do who was prosecuting some vigorous muscular undertaking for the first time in his life. On the music coming to an end, Sale turned round to my brother with an air of triumph, and said, 'There! I used the pedals all through the *Magnificat*, and I didn't hear a single wrong note!'

"Having thus demonstrated to his own satisfaction that accurate pedal-playing on first trial was one of

the easiest things going, he gave up the organ stool, and allowed my brother to play the remainder of the service.

“Organists of moderate ability, if the truth *must* be told, were by no means rare fifty years ago. For instance, there was a gentleman, a Bachelor of Music in one of our universities, whom I had heard play upon the organ on more than one occasion, with whose performance somehow I had not been very deeply impressed; yet, being only a young student myself, it occurred to me that the fault might possibly rest with my own immature powers of judging. I therefore determined to take the opportunity, on the next occasion of my going to hear the Appollicon, which was at that time the chief exhibition organ in London, to ask the elder Mr. Robson—one of its builders—what was thought of Mr. Hind as an organist. It afterwards turned out that he was really but an indifferent performer; but Mr. Robson’s mode of communicating that fact to me was so amusing that I have never forgotten it. On my putting my question, Mr. Robson looked at me for a few moments, and then said, with an air of mock solemnity, ‘Sir, Mr. Hind is a most *respectable* man.’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I have no doubt of that; but what I am desirous to know is, how he ranks as a performer upon the organ?’ ‘Sir,’ resumed Mr. Robson, ‘he

is a most *exemplary* man, and one who plays as though he were also a very *charitable* man.' 'Well, but Mr. Robson, *would* you mind telling me what on earth you mean by saying he performs like a charitable man?' 'Well, if I *must* be very explicit, Mr. Hind plays upon the organ as though he "letteth not his left hand know what his right hand doeth!"'

"This had reference to the performance of a gentleman holding the minor university degree."

With regard to church choral services, Dr. Hopkins proceeded to say:—

"Forty-four years ago—incredible as it probably will seem to most of those present—almost the only buildings in England in which choral service was celebrated were the cathedrals and some of the minster churches and royal chapels. In London there were but three such choral and surpliced choirs; namely, those at St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and St. James' Chapel Royal."

This is quite true; but our hero must not forget the extraordinary effects which were made at the Leeds parish church forty-six years ago in the same direction, led on by such energetic, celebrated men

as Dr. Jebb, Dr. Hook, Dr. Wesley, and a number of enthusiastic clerical musicians, the result of whose splendid efforts, and example of what a beautiful choral service should be, and its value in promoting the highest form of our church services, soon extended itself over the whole of Yorkshire and Lancashire, so that now scarcely a town, or even a village church, can be found, where some portions of the choral service are not performed "by surplined choir in chant sublime." Why, may I ask here, does not some competent person, acquainted with the history of the parish church choir, and of its choral services, which ought to, and doubtless would, prove deeply interesting to thousands of earnest Church people everywhere, especially in Leeds and the neighbourhood, write a full, true, and particular account thereof?

My personal relations and intercourse with my distinguished friend have for a long series of years been of the pleasantest and most cordial character. While organist and choirmaster at the parish church of Daventry, North Hants, where for three years I spent some of the happiest moments of my life, Dr. Hopkins visited me on two or three occasions. The revival in church architecture and church restoration had just commenced; and among those who took a deep interest in the movement were Sir Henry Dry-

den, the lineal descendant of the poet "Glorious John" of that ilk, and many of the leading clergy of the district. Sir Henry having engaged me for harmony lessons, as well as to train a choir for his own beautiful old church, I was a frequent and welcome guest at Canons Ashby; and thither, in company with Mr. Hopkins, I drove over, or as Sir Henry put it, "*through* the rough roads," embracing the opportunity so kindly offered of wandering over hill and dale, and inspecting the fine specimens of church architecture, most of the buildings being then in a wretched, dilapidated condition, and a disgrace to Churchman. I believe it is a fact that, since that time, nearly every church in North Hants worth restoring has been restored.

Our pleasant drives through beautiful country, in company with our respective young wives, visiting the churches, and being hospitably entertained by the vicars and rectors thereof, are among the most cherished recollections of our young manhood. Our enjoyment and similar pleasures were not, however, confined to rustic visits and adventures alone; for, on my frequent visits to London, one of the greatest delights I experienced was to visit Dr. Hopkins at the Temple Church, and to hear and play the beautiful organ therein—the history of which, by the way, from its erection in 1684 by Bernard Schmidt

(Father Smith) to 1884, reveals some curious facts, about which, and about the organists of the church, a whole volume could be written. The instrument itself, grand as it is now, after passing through many vicissitudes and changes, reminds me of the old schoolboy's story of his grandfather's knife, which had been re-bladed three times, and received a new handle twice.

Henry Smart used to tell a humorous story of an accidental meeting, one fine summer's morning, of Hopkins, Rimbault, and himself, on London Bridge, each carrying a roll of music under his arm, and each stating to the other how sorry he was to be obliged to give lessons almost immediately some distance off, so that they could only enjoy a short greeting.

"I looked over the bridge," Smart used to say, "and saw the sunbeams dancing on the water, and the steamboats and other craft passing rapidly up and down, and exclaimed, 'What a shame that we, on such a morning as this, should be compelled to keep our noses to the grindstone, and not be able to have a sail over Father Thames, and breathe the pure ozone at Gravesend!'"

"Ah!" exclaimed Rimbault, "how delightful that would be!"

"No, no," added Hopkins, with his usual dis-

cretion; "we must at once go to our business and do our duty."

Smart in his most persuasive way, and with a graphic description of what they might do if only they would let the pupils go to Jericho or somewhere else for a few hours, at last landed them on a steamboat bound for Gravesend; but they would only positively go as far as Greenwich, and return from thence at once by train. Most thoroughly did they enjoy this water-trip; and, Dr. Rimbault being in the middle of a pretty tale when the boat stopped at Greenwich, the trio forgot all about their engagements, and the next thing they found out was that they were absolutely at Gravesend, and were compelled to land there. Now, as it was getting late in the afternoon, there was nothing left but first to visit the famous hostelry, the Falcon, and then, at the suggestion of one of them, to walk on and see Mr. John Larkin Hopkins, the organist of Rochester Cathedral.

"We found ourselves," continued Smart, "in the coffee-room of the principal hotel, and each at once called for pens, ink, and paper, and as rapidly as possible wrote a stereotyped form of note to our various pupils, excusing our attendance on the ground of a sudden and unexpected catastrophe!"

Smart used to add much more about their remark-

able doings in Rochester, where they remained two days, and were so happy and so interested in the cathedral, the organ, and the restoration of both, that an apocryphal account was actually sent to and published in the *Times*, much, it may be supposed, to the astonishment of the dignitaries of the cathedral, and of the inhabitants of the city, who were totally ignorant of the fact.

XXI.

ÉDOUARD BATISTE, LEFÈBURE WÉLY, ETC.

THE preceding "Musical Memories," do not include recollections of a number of respected friends, whom I have known well, and of whom I could say something which probably would be interesting to my readers.

Among these I may mention Henry Leslie; Joseph Barnby; J. W. Davison, forty years the *Times* musical critic; Chorley, the musical critic of the *Athenæum*; Wély and Batiste, the great French organists; Madame Valleria; Madame Marie Roze; John Barnett, composer of the beautiful opera, *The Mountain Sylph*; Dr. Walmisley, a Cambridge Professor of Music; James Coward, the clever Crystal Palace organist; the Brahams, father and sons; Thomas Adams, one of the finest organists England ever produced; Professor Hullah; Sir John Rogers, then president of the Western Madrigal Society; Charles Lucas, a prominent and active member of the Royal Academy of Music; Mr. W. T. Best; Drs. Stainer

and Bridge; Mr. J. K. Pyne, a clever organist of rare powers and ability; and many other celebrities too numerous to mention, as well as amateurs such as Colonel Wilkinson, of Stockport, who manipulates the organ, pianoforte, and 'cello, with such admirable taste and judgment.

At the earnest request of several admirers of the French composer, Batiste, whose works are now played wherever organ music is known, I may give a few words respecting his compositions and career.

Édouard Batiste, the celebrated organist of St. Eustache, Paris, was a man of no ordinary kind; his beautiful andantes, offertoires, and organ music generally, are quite equal, if not superior, to anything which has been produced by either Lefèbure Wély, Morandi, Widor, and other much-lauded continental composers for the organ. Notwithstanding this eulogy of Batiste, I am bound to admit that his works often exhibit a repetition of the original theme not always to be commended. At the same time, I confess not to understand the omission of his beautiful music from the programmes of eminent English organists, who persistently introduce works of other writers of a far inferior character, and ignore Batiste. It may be interesting to organists to know that, in the first instance, Batiste was known in this country by a mere accident, eman-

ating from myself. About fifteen or sixteen years ago, I went to St. Eustache, Paris, in company with Henry Smart, to meet Mons. Édouard Batiste, the organist of that church. He was a fat, podgy, round-faced gentleman, full of glib conversation and anecdote. My friend, Henry Smart, spoke French fairly well, and managed to get a word in (edgewise) occasionally. As for myself, I was nowhere, excepting when I got to the beautiful organ built by Cavaillé Coll. It was then that I asked him to hear the andante in G, which I told him I had christened the *Pilgrim's Song of Hope*, adding that it had become known and popular in every quarter of the globe where organ music was played. He was greatly interested in the observations I made on this subject, and in the fact of my having edited all his organ works in England; so much so, that I spent a long day with him at the Café Royale, afterwards winding up, as the custom is with most Frenchmen, at a *café chanson* in the Champs Elysées.

The English biographers of Batiste do him but little justice; and although I spent several years in editing his works, the latest musical biographers do not even mention this fact; but I am able to supply the culpable omission, and give a small account of him, which, so far as it goes, I believe is correct.

BATISTE (ANTOINE ÉDOUARD), French organist, professor and composer, born Paris, March 28th, 1820. Studied at Paris Conservatoire under Leborne, Bienaimé, Le Couppey, Halévy, and Benoist. Gained second prize for solfeggi, 1832; gained first ditto, 1833; gained second prize for harmony and accompaniment, 1836; first prize, ditto, 1837; second prize for counterpoint and fugue, and second prize for the organ, 1838; first prize for both, 1839; gained second Grand Prix de Rome, 1840; professor of singing at the Conservatoire from 1836; organist of the Church of St. Nicholas des Champs, 1842; organist of St. Eustache, Paris, 1855. Died at Paris, November 9th, 1876.

Works.—Instruction books for singing. Piano-forte music, organ music, consisting of offertoires, sonatas, fugues, fantasias, voluntaries, etc. Songs, church music, etc.

This organist was accounted among the best of modern performers in the brilliant style. His compositions are, on the whole, good and serviceable if somewhat showy pieces for the organ. His andante movements are no doubt the most adapted for church use, and they are not only very melodious, but also very skilfully constructed. Batiste endeavoured to procure from his instrument effects

which can be said to belong legitimately only to the orchestra. The success with which orchestral effects are imitated on the organ is marvellous. Skilful organists seem to produce the more broad orchestral colourings with the greatest ease. Overtures are transcribed and rendered in a style combining neatness with fulness, but the delicate gradations of light and shade are not, with the present mechanism, perfectly attainable. Batiste's organ music is sometimes noisy, always brilliant, and not so sacred and dignified as English church music is expected to be.

This account of Batiste and his works must be received *cum grano salis*; and I would commend the careful study of Batiste's organ pieces to all organists, amateur or professional, who wish to make themselves acquainted with the resources and delights of the modern organ.

Perhaps I ought to mention that Madame Batiste, on behalf of herself and her daughters, wrote to me to express their gratitude for my sympathy on his lamented demise, and for my having edited his works in England; and much more than this, which of course, I cannot repeat.

LEFÈBURE WÉLY, whom the majority of organists in England think far superior to Batiste, and whose

popular pianoforte pieces, *Les Cloches de Monastère*, is so well known throughout the musical world, called on me when visiting Paris, at a time when I was staying at the hotel L'Etoile du Nord, and asked me to hear his beautiful instrument in the Church of the Madeleine, where, after hearing my companion, Henry Smart, play, he excitedly exclaimed, "Superb! superb!"

The next year, when playing the "Wedding March" for the marriage of a favourite pupil, Wély died on the spot, in harness, which he always said was his wish.

Lefèbure Wély was undoubtedly one of the most clever organists of his day. He, as I have already intimated, wrote some very attractive pianoforte pieces, and many popular organ works, including the *Storm* piece, or Sonata Pastorale, which has been played by many organists in England under other titles, and has made his name not only familiar, but famous.

Personally, I never met with a more genial, kind-hearted Frenchman than Lefèbure Wély. He was the *beau idéal* of a gentleman. After playing to Mr. Smart and myself for nearly an hour, extemporaneously, he devoted himself entirely for the rest of the day to the less sedate pleasures of the Champs

Elysée and the Chateau de Fleurs. Of his works and doings I could write a volume, but I hope I have said sufficient to show that Wély was no ordinary character, but a genius of whom the musical world is justly proud.



HENRY LESLIE.

From a photo by Elliott & Fry,

LETTERS TO *THE MUSICAL WORLD*
ON
MUSICAL CONDUCTORS.

LETTER No. I.

I SHALL feel obliged if you will allow me to make some remarks upon a subject respecting which there appears to be an abundant lack of knowledge, even among those who profess to have an acquaintance with such matters—I mean the duties and qualifications of a successful musical conductor.

The growing interest, now happily so prevalent, in most matters which refer to the progress of the Divine art, and the extension of associations for securing in the provinces the performance of first-class music, embolden me to hope that the remarks I am about to make will at least be interesting, if not useful, to those persons—and their name is legion—who are persuaded that, when the just and legitimate influence of music is understood and properly applied, it will become an agent as kindly as it is powerful in the social world.

There can be no doubt whatever that the progress and prosperity of music depend, to a great degree, on the character and attainments of its professors; especially of those who, to a considerable extent,

guide the public taste by arranging, managing, and conducting musical performances. In a country where music is almost universally studied, either as a necessary part of education, or as a means of affording healthful relaxation from the work of daily life, or to give, as Burns has it,

“Ease from toil, relief from care,”

it is of the utmost consequence that both the selection and the execution of music at public concerts—which are certain of imitation, not only at private musical meetings, but at the numerous other concerts which are constantly taking place in small towns and villages—should be entrusted to those musicians who are fairly entitled, from their acknowledged ability as composer, pianist, organist, violinist, etc., to act as chief or conductor.

The term “conductor” is generally applied to “the person who arranges, orders, and directs the necessary preparations for a concert, and also superintends and conducts the performances.” A conductor’s business at what is commonly called a “pianoforte concert”—*i.e.*, where there are merely two or three principal performers, and where the piano affords the only accompaniment to the vocal music—is light indeed compared with that which involves the training and practising of large num-

bers of vocalists or instrumentalists for concert with a "full band," an "efficient chorus," or, as in oratorios and operas, with both combined.

The duties of a conductor become onerous in proportion to the number of those engaged in a performance, and the difficulty of the works to be executed; and those frequenters of our "grand" concerts, who imagine that the conductor's business is confined solely to the use of the *bâton*, or to performances at the piano, either as accompanist or soloist, are egregiously mistaken. The office of a conductor is indeed anything but a sinecure. Those only have ever entirely succeeded who have possessed qualifications rarely found united in one man.

1. It is absolutely necessary that the conductor should be a *composer* in the full acceptance of the term; one who can, if necessary, produce large and good works for band and chorus; who can arrange quickly songs, duets, etc., for full orchestra, from a pianoforte accompaniment, and *vice versâ*; and who can judiciously add extra parts for wind or string instruments, to give additional effect to meagrely constructed scores.

2. He must possess a knowledge of the world as well as of music. He must unite great firmness and determination of purpose, without compromising the character of the man of good sense and the gentle-

man. He must have "no mean and narrow prejudices," or spiteful revenges, in his disposition. He must give equal attention to the half-slumbering juvenile at the triangles, to the solemn double-bass, and to the careful and watchful principal violin.

3. He must possess a thorough knowledge of every piece performed, not only from a practical, but from a theoretical point of view. Without this he cannot pretend to correct an error, either in any separate part, or in his own full score; and without this capability he should never, in my humble opinion, presume to wield the *bâton*.

4. He must possess the quick susceptibility of faculty, rendered in the highest degree acute by culture, necessary to enable him to detect the most trifling error at rehearsal; and, in pointing out the error, he must do so without wounding the feelings of the performer. This latter point is one of the most difficult a conductor has to encounter: should he be abrupt in his detection and exposure of an erring executant, he is certain to give offence; and should he be silent, and allow the error to pass uncorrected, the chances are that he will be denounced by some *charitable* members of the orchestra as incapable of fulfilling satisfactorily the manifold duties of his office.

5. A conductor must be endowed with the most

delicate perception of the measure of time and the play of rhythms, that he may indicate the *tempos* with accurate division and decision. He must neither *beat time like a machine*, nor must he be so extravagant or violent in his manner as to divert the attention of the audience from the music to the eccentric gyrations of his spasmodic *bâton*. Like the talented conductor Costa, he may make the motion of his *bâton* and of his hands indicative of both force and expression. To invoke a *fortissimo*, and a decisive entrance of the brass instruments in orchestral music, I have seen the grand *maestro* significantly *raise both his hands*, in addition to an imperial wave of the *bâton* over his head, effecting at once the purpose desired; and how expressive the movement he employs to obtain a *crescendo tutti*, and the intimation of the left hand when he would have the delicacy of a *piano*! But, alas! to many persons—those who have no real music in their souls—all that belongs to *feeling* in matters of art is stuff and affectation; beauty, they think, is an affair of line and rule, and *taste* a question of law and precedent, or an easy rule-of-three sum.

6. A good conductor must at all times be prepared to accompany on the pianoforte all kinds of pieces, songs, duets, violin solos, etc., in all sorts of keys, or rather, a "bunch of keys," at a moment's

notice. He must gratify the soaring taste of the high tenor by transposing his song a note or two higher; the contralto he must conciliate by playing her solemn ballad in a lower key; and he must accomplish the whole task without touching a single wrong note, or woe betide him from the critics, great and small, professional, newspaper, amateur, or lady. And, besides all this, he must have magnanimity enough to suppress all display on the instrument, making his performances wholly subsidiary to the vocalist, whom he must nevertheless support at all points, covering any failure with a shower of notes, while the artist revives again.

But all this, and more, is required of those who aspire to the office of musical conductor; and though few can lay claim to the numerous qualifications which I have but imperfectly enumerated, still, it is to him alone who possesses them that the highly important office of musical conductor may with safety be entrusted.

There is one point of considerable importance connected with this subject, which I will reserve for my next communication; *viz.*, the frequently anomalous and antagonistic, but now, happily, almost obsolete, office of *leader* in a large orchestra directed by an intelligent conductor.

LETTER No. II.

THE greatest obstacle to the conductor in the efficient discharge of his duty arises from the equivocal position of the leader, or first violin.

It is needless to discuss why the leader had formerly a more complicated range of functions than are more properly assigned to him. The judgment of all the highest authorities, and the practice of all the best orchestral performances, concur in the separation of the duties of the leader and the conductor; at least, in all *large* orchestras, where there is an intelligent and an *intelligible* conductor.

As regards the first violin, it is quite obvious that, as an artist, his position is more honourable and distinguished as taking the first instrument, the one whose clear, firm, well-pronounced tone runs through the whole composition, and links, as it were, silver threads felt rather than perceived in a good orchestra by every performer.

The first violin is properly the keystone of the arch, not the dead weight, to keep it from being thrust out of position. I cannot but think that the purity of style of some of our best violinists has been impaired, while that of several of the old school

had become barbarous, from the habit of strong bowing, grown habitual through the supposed necessity of making the fiddle growl, grumble, shout, scold, and admonish the arrant propensities of other instruments in the band. If it were not that the whole beauty of a performance is frequently marred by the intermittent playing of the leader, now executing a few bars pleasantly enough, anon giving a fortissimo plunge, with a rasp as musical as the sharpening of a saw, then revolving convulsively on his axis and waving his bow to beat time, or, to all appearance, to menace some unlucky wight with a rap on the knuckles, and again bowing away with a forty-fiddler power—if, I say, we were not conscious that all this is ruinous to the smooth and regular flow of harmony, we might regard it as a series of sportive feats, performed by the leader with a celerity that astonishes the beholder.

Such is the love of power, that, although the exchange of the position of leader for that of first violinist places the artist in a far better position for the exercise of his musical skill and taste, yet there is no doubt that many performances are marred in consequence of the reluctance of the gentleman who has *violino primo* to take the time and general reading of a composition from the conductor.

As regards art, this is unpardonable; for there can

be no token of the highest order of merit so conspicuous and decisive as the hearty abandonment of selfish display in any artistic production. But I hesitate not to say that this morbid jealousy of precedence, or apparent superiority, tends to jar and disturb that unity in which consists the principal charm of any great work, or indeed of any composite work, and by impairing the effectiveness of the whole brings discredit, more or less, on all its parts.

I should be sorry to have it supposed that I wish for one moment to depreciate the qualities of the gentlemen who take the post of first violinist. Among this number are enrolled many of the finest musicians in the country—men of taste, knowledge, and matured experience, men in every respect competent to act as conductors, but utterly incapable, from the very nature of things, of *uniting* the office of leader and conductor.

This confusion of offices reminds one of the lady who played Juliet, and then sang as principal vocalist in her own requiem; or of the military commander fighting hand to hand with some drum hero trooper, while disorder is spreading from one wing of his army to the other.

If there is to be a conductor, his *bâton* must be the guiding star of the orchestra; there must be no con-

flicting authorities. If we are to have two parties, each of whom shall be regarded as directing the execution of concerted music, we may as well hand it over to a committee, and take a vote upon the length of every crotchet and quaver. No; the firmament will not hold two suns—the musical world will not submit to a divided rule. In the council of war (in other words, at the rehearsal), let the veteran performer, or the accomplished young artist, freely give his opinion, and let every effort be made to produce a perfect consonance and sympathy between the conductor and the orchestra. When this is once established, there should be no kicking, no shortening, no reluctance to produce a proposed result; but all should unite as one man, as though for a season all were animated by one soul, only exhibiting such harmonious variety as in human nature, no less than in art, reflects the greatest element of beauty established by the Creator, infinite diversity of detail reconciled with infinite unity.

Now the conductor must stand as the exponent of the harmonizing power, his attention disengaged from the embarrassment of any instrument, having the whole work before him; and as he vibrates to his very soul with its rhythms, having it for one second a thing of imagination, in the next a stirring fact, he is not so much a director or governor, in the

vulgar sense of the expression, as the focus of emotion and impulse; and as the best ruler of a people is said to be the man who most completely reflects the prevailing sentiment, so the most successful conductor will, during the actual performance, be responsive to every movement; even as the heart which propels the blood through our system derives its stimulus from that blood, so the conductor, if we treat him as the heart of our orchestral performance, derives his stimulus from the mind, speaking through the material instruments, of the individual executant. One great reason for the conductor being disenthralled from the charge of an instrument is the advantage it gives the band and chorus of having the aid of two senses instead of one for their guidance. If the ear wanders from the regulation of its own instrument to listen to the leader, the old adage of the two stools is very apt to be realized; whereas, taking this information through the eye by an occasional glance at the conductor, the execution is not liable to disturbance. At the same time, if the first violin play freely and steadily, his legitimate sustaining influence will be thoroughly *felt* by the body of performers; and just as he is apt to beget a jerking style of playing by *pulling* or twanging the orchestra together from time to time, so he will assuredly induce, though perhaps with

mutual unconsciousness, an evenness of execution in every department, by playing the music set down for him with clearness and neatness, though of course with marked decision and style.

In conclusion, while there can be no doubt that many instances could readily be given of *small* orchestras playing well and effectively together without the aid of a conductor, I think it must be clear to every unbiassed orchestra writer and performer that it is quite out of the question to attempt to produce successful concerts, at which large numbers of executants are engaged, unless the performances are directed by a sound musician as conductor, whose qualifications for the important office are such as I have endeavoured to define in the two letters which I have written on the subject.

There are several other points connected with this matter, especially the advantages to be derived from every individual member of an orchestra acting under the advice and direction of a clever chief, and also the mischief arising from incompetent persons endeavouring, at small concerts, to *imitate* a successful conductor merely as far as *time-beating* goes.

VOCAL MUSIC A NECESSARY BRANCH
OF EDUCATION.

*(A Paper read at the Social Science Congress, Leeds,
1871.)*

THE excellence and utility of music as a branch of education prompts me to take this opportunity of bringing before you the consideration of this much-neglected subject. At the first glance it seems incredible that, from either point of view, one word should be necessary to show that music is both a beautiful and a useful art, and that it ought to be included in the curriculum of every educational institution in the land. It is, however, a lamentable fact, that this art, aptly christened "Divine," which, in its beneficent influence on mankind, is at least equal to the other fine arts, has not occupied yet the position to which it is entitled in this country, especially amongst the male portion of the upper and middle classes.

In the cultivation of music, as in the establishment of schools of art and design, we are in the rear of most other civilized nations—a fact which ought to secure the careful attention of those educationists who desire that every good and useful art should be employed for the benefit of their fellows. In the instructive address given by the Earl of Derby at

the opening of a new school of art and science for Birkenhead, his lordship pointed out that the proportion of students instructed in art by certificated teachers is six times as large in Germany as in England; and with regard to France a still more unfavourable contrast may be drawn. In the art of music the proportion of students in these countries is still larger; and even America, as will be shown presently, is altogether outstripping us in musical education.

To awaken interest, and to give information on the subject to those who need it, an able article appeared in the July number of the *Quarterly Review*, entitled, "Music: its Origin and Influence." The writer admirably states the claims that the art has upon our attention, and the basis on which those claims are founded. He concludes the first part of his subject by saying that "enough has been said to vindicate the almost passionate conviction of thoughtful musicians, that music is more than a pastime; that it holds a distinct, a legitimate, a clearly defined position amongst the arts; and that it is capable of exercising the most powerful and beneficial, as well as the most delightful influences upon the cultured few and upon the untutored many."

Is it possible, indeed, to deny the excellence, the

beauty, and the utility of music, when applied to the purposes of Divine worship?

Can we oppose its claims to grandeur when associated with the "pomp and circumstance" of military ceremonial, or real or mimic war?

Are we insensible to an ennobling influence when we listen to the inspired ideas of the great masters of music, developed in their oratorios, symphonies, operas, sonatas, songs?

Have we not all experienced the sweetness of the influence of this art, when exercised by the pure voices of a thousand children in the open air, hymning in unison the praises of their Creator?

Do we not know here, in the north of England, that the numerous artisan brass bands and vocal associations, which give life and spirit to thousands upon thousands of hard-working, weary bread-winners, afford to their members unmitigated delight as they practise, perform, and reflect upon the dulcet strains of good music?

And, lastly, now that pianos are almost as universally found in houses as tea-caddies—no home being considered furnished without one—have we not domestic music constantly employed to administer to our pleasures, and to awaken in us a sense of the beautiful?

The love of music pervades all classes of society. The existence of a natural taste for the art is widely

spread, and needs only organization and cultivation to produce the most satisfactory results. The enormous sums annually expended in the United Kingdom—chiefly upon foreign art and artists—afford sufficient proof of the desire to gratify this taste for music at almost any cost.

But, notwithstanding our wealth, our natural aptitude and love for the art, our constant demand for and employment of music in public and private life, it is a fact that our education as a nation is extremely defective in this respect; and our Government gives little or no aid towards the encouragement and development of this art, whose beauty scarcely surpasses its utility. Only a few years ago the paltry subsidy of five hundred pounds to the Royal Academy of Music—the only institution of the kind we possess—was withdrawn; and it was with considerable difficulty that Sir Sterndale Bennett, and other leading members of the profession, induced the prime minister to reconsider the question, and continue this small annual payment. And it is only since the passing of the Elementary Education Bill, that a golden opportunity was afforded of making vocal music an indispensable part of the education of every child—that the energetic remonstrances of several good and earnest musicians succeeded in wringing from our esteemed

friend and neighbour, Mr. Forster (from whom, as a West Riding man, we expected better things), the promise, not of assistance, but that in schools where music was not taught, a fine should be imposed upon the teachers of one shilling per head! This is indeed a hard case, and is only equalled by the ancient command that the bricks should be made without straw.

At present the children in all elementary and national schools are taught vocal music chiefly by ear, and without any authorized, definite system of part-singing; there is a complete absence of plan, and great deficiency of knowledge on the part of teachers and inspectors. Need I assert then that the result is most unsatisfactory, and utterly unworthy of our great and successful efforts in other branches of education?

This is bad enough, but in our higher-class schools, especially in our grammar schools, the case is worse, presenting a lamentable contrast to the practice of our forefathers, and the custom in similar schools in other countries. It may be well here to reiterate the oft-repeated fact, that, in the Elizabethan era, no gentleman was considered sufficiently educated who could not take his part, at sight, in the somewhat complex choral music of the day; and history affords us several amusing

instances of surprise expressed at the ignorance of certain gentlemen, guests at evening parties, who could not sing correctly, the rest of the company "wondering *how* they had been brought up."

In Deloney's "History of the Gentle Craft" (published in 1598), an amusing story is told of a man who tried to pass for a shoemaker, but whose imposture was detected "because he could neither sing, sound the trumpet, play upon the flute, nor reckon up his tools in rhyme. Tinkers sang catches; milkmaids sang ballads; carters whistled; each trade, and even the beggars, had their peculiar songs; the bass viol hung up in the drawing-room for the amusement of waiting visitors; and the lute, cittern, and virginals, for the use of waiting customers, were the necessary furniture of the barber's shop. They had music at dinner, music at supper, music at weddings, music at funerals, music at night, music at dawn, music at work, and music at play. He who felt not, in some degree, its soothing influence, was viewed as a morose, unsocial being, whose converse ought to be shunned and regarded with suspicion and distrust."

Doubtless it was this universal love and cultivation of music in the days of good Queen Bess that led Shakespeare to write the well-known lines :

“The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils.”

I am afraid that if our great dramatist's test were applied to a large majority of our legislators, we should arrive at the conclusion that very few of them could be trusted.

I intimated just now that in most of our grammar and other high-class schools, music is either not taught at all, or is only imperfectly imparted. Even here in the West Riding, where the natural love and taste for music is so strong, this neglect of its cultivation is only too apparent. In our own grammar school there is no regular instruction, though great hopes are entertained that this will soon follow the boon which has recently been conferred upon the school by making lessons in drawing compulsory. Let me however allude to one or two leading schools—and doubtless there are many others unknown to me—where music *is* regarded as a most valuable, if not an indispensable, branch of education. Among the public schools I may instance Rugby and Marlborough. At each of these institutions there is a resident and efficient music-master, who imparts sound instruction both in vocal and in instrumental music. From my own experience I can testify to the beneficial results arising from this provision.

Numbers of our best amateurs have obtained their knowledge of music from this sound and systematic teaching, and have greatly helped to disseminate throughout the country a taste for high-class works. But the most notable instance I can adduce of the advantages of the cultivation of music, combined with a classical education, is that of St. Michael's College, Tenbury, founded by the accomplished Oxford Professor of Music, Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley. Here the boys are thoroughly taught, not only good secular music, but to take an efficient part in the beautiful choral services of the church. The choir, to my mind, is a model one; and at the same time nothing seems to be wanting in classical and general education, and in the development of that "muscular Christianity" which is nearly always accompanied by clear brains and pure ideas.

At the commencement of my remarks I said that, not only Germany and France, but the United States outstrips us in musical education. Taking the last country first, I may observe that it was only so recently as June of the present year, 1871, that an American Musical Congress was held in Boston, for the purpose of reading papers and discussing various matters connected with the practice and performance of music throughout the States; and also that part-singing at sight in schools was one of the

most prominent subjects investigated and ventilated. During the meeting of the Congress, which lasted many days, several public schools of the city were visited by some seventy or eighty ladies and gentlemen, in which schools exhibitions were given for their entertainment and instruction. In one of the primary schools the visitors were informed that the class of small children brought forward had not been specially prepared for exhibition, but that they would be put through their every-day course in music. The illustrations were then given in sight-singing and the first principles of notation, with the assistance of the blackboard and charts; and the listeners were unanimous in their approval of the system, and highly pleased with the proficiency of the young beginners. Proceeding to the lower Grammar School, the members of the Congress witnessed another exhibition, quite as satisfactory as the first, and even more interesting, of how well music can be taught by system to the young. In this instance the scholars, who ranged from ten to twelve years of age, not only showed a knowledge of scales and exercises in different keys, but one of them wrote on the blackboard, almost perfectly, an impromptu exercise, which was sung by a member of the Congress, a stranger to the school and to the system. The Girls' High and Normal School was next

visited, and here the proficiency was still greater; the pupils singing admirably, at first sight, several exercises and part-songs, and finishing with Mendelssohn's somewhat difficult motet, "Ye Sons of Israel," and with the favourite trio from *Elijah*, "Lift thine eyes."

I may mention that at this same Congress clergymen and others read essays on oratorio music; generals spoke on the works of great composers; business men dwelt on the high personal character, as well as the artistic nature, of Mendelssohn; professors lingered with a loving tenderness in describing the beauties of some favourite masterpiece; and constantly, during the time that the Congress was assembled, compositions of the highest order were performed to appreciative musicians and enthusiastic amateurs.

Our American cousins evidently spare no trouble, time, or expense in gratifying their taste for music; they are fast draining this country of its best singers and musicians, who find in the New World a greater reward for their labour and their talent than has been vouchsafed them in the Old World.

Before leaving the Americans, I must mention one very interesting fact, which was stated at the Congress by General Henry K. Oliver, of Salem. After referring to the refining influence of music on the

masses, he gave some gratifying facts from his own experience. Amongst other things, he said that, encouraged by some official influence, he had formed a choral society among the operatives in a mill, and found that over a hundred of them were capable of singing their proper parts. What a power of good may lie behind this! Here is a field for the minister of religion and for the philanthropist! Through the medium of song, the loftiest truths might be imparted; by the gentle influence of sweet music, swarms of our mill-hands and other operatives could learn the story of redeeming love, and ultimately would sing in the soul-entrancing oratorio of the *Messiah*, of which it has been said: "This work has done more to educate musical taste, unclasp the bands of charity, and unfold the mind of God to man, than any other composition, save the Bible itself."

In Germany, as most of us know, musical education is universal and complete. In schools of every grade—in conservatoires, at home, and in public—music is taught, encouraged, and assisted by the State; loved, cultivated, and cherished by all classes of society, from the emperor to the peasant. The Teuton carries with him to the four quarters of the globe—for he is to be found everywhere—a love and a knowledge of music; and wherever there is a

colony of Germans, small or great, *there* good music is sure of warm appreciation and liberal encouragement. As an example of the musical training of the young in Germany, I will relate an incident which I observed as I travelled last year from Dresden to Magdeburg. At one of the stations (Oschatz), where we stopped for refreshment, a number of boys (probably twenty), returning from school, were met by their companions, and also by several young girls. The whole party quickly formed into a procession; and, marching off two abreast with military precision—headed by the biggest boy, who played a large accordion—they sang, with excellent time and accent, to some appropriate words, a remarkably vigorous and melodious two-part song. Such spontaneous instances are rare in this country, and it is seldom that one hears a number of young scholars sing anything more than the simple air or melody of even the most popular and familiar music. Not that we are deficient as a nation in musical instinct; far from it, for we possess some of the best composers, singers, and instrumentalists in the world. But these are individual cases, arising generally from inborn genius and indomitable energy and perseverance. The masses of the people, high and low, rich and poor, are musically uneducated, and

prefer only what they can understand—weak, meaningless compositions.

To this love of music, and this deficiency in its cultivation, we may attribute the spread of that sensuous, debasing class of so-called comic songs—which delight the young men of the period—in our music saloons and concert halls. In a lively brochure (lately published) from the pen of the well-known painter, Mr. Henry O'Neil, the author thus alludes to these music halls :

“Why to the music halls should I refer ?
Those pandemoniums which minister
To tastes the lowest that to men belong,
By sickly ballad, or by vulgar song,
Which most assuredly achieve success
By aid of Bass, or Barclay or Guinness.
Though Mario to please some few may chance,
What are his worshippers to those of Vance ?
Mark, when the latter issues from the ‘Cave
Of Harmony,’ how all the ‘beery ’ wave
Their greasy caps, and cheer with voices hoarse
That hero of the vulgar and the coarse.”

To counteract this baneful influence, the rising generation should have correct ideas concerning real music instilled into them before they can contract vicious tastes, and which will prove an everlasting and effectual antidote to any tendency to form such tastes. The best music should be performed upon

every fitting occasion, and at admission prices within the reach of all. This has been most successfully done in Leeds for many years past, at the people's or popular concerts; but as this subject is alluded to in another paper, I need not say more about it.

What we require in this country is sound musical instruction, and substantial, as well as systematic, government aid. Unfortunately, in music, as in some other matters, the tendency of the age is towards display and not towards knowledge. Hundreds of young ladies—ay, and many teachers too—will sit down at the piano, and exhibit great manual dexterity, who are unable to account for the production of a single chord or sound. Scientific instruction is rarely sought, and of course but seldom imparted.

The universal desire for some sort of musical instruction has brought to the surface—notably in our large towns—numbers of ill-educated, incompetent, youthful teachers of both sexes, who are enemies and hindrances to the progress of true art; who teach upon no artistic data; and who impart that paltry smattering of musical instruction which develops itself in the encouragement and performance of poor puerile compositions. This evil will only be remedied when it shall be considered indispens-

able for teachers to possess certificates of merit and efficiency, or musical degrees granted at our universities, by experienced musicians, by authorized colleges, or by national institutions. Something has been done, we are aware, by the Committee of the Council on Education, in the recognition of the Wilhelm and tonic sol-fa systems of teaching vocal music; but the concession is so small as to leave musical instruction mainly in the hands of uncertificated and incompetent teachers.

It has been stated that the chief plea of the Government, first for its omission and subsequently for its tardy admission of music teaching in the clauses of the Elementary Education Act, was the fact that the inspectors generally are unacquainted with the art, and unable to conduct the necessary examinations. Doubtless this *is* a difficulty, but how has it been overcome in America and elsewhere? By a course which I apprehend would at once be adopted here in respect to other branches of education—the formation of a commission of eminent professional musicians, who would report to the Government upon the best means of imparting musical instruction in schools, and of cultivating the art generally throughout the country. Doubtless it would be an advantage to have a central board, as in the case of the drawing department; and certainly

there should be, as in America, district inspectors—the best and most cultivated men of the profession—whose duty it would be to visit all schools within their jurisdiction, and to examine, direct, and encourage teachers as well as scholars in their knowledge and practice of music.

Before concluding these few general remarks, I wish to mention that an excellent scheme has been drawn up by the Church Schoolmasters' and Schoolmistresses' Benevolent Institution of Leeds, in which it is proposed to improve the taste for part-singing in our local schools, by bringing together periodically, in the Town Hall, a large selected number of pupils to sing sacred and secular part music, simultaneously distributed for practice to each school. The teachers naturally feel that something ought to be done to improve the children's knowledge of part-singing, their present efforts being almost entirely confined to the singing of melodies only, thus affording a painful contrast to the pupils' acquirements in this branch of education in Germany, Switzerland, France, and America.

I do sincerely believe that much might and ought to be done by which the means of musical instruction could be made so much greater, readier, and more efficient, that the people generally might be able to appreciate and enjoy the soul-inspiring

strains of the great masters of song. The desire of one of them—good old Morley, of the Madrigalian era—supplies me with appropriate parting words:

“ Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing.’

SCRAPS AND ANECDOTES.

HOW I ONCE SPENT CHRISTMAS EVE.

As the organist to the corporation of the borough of Leeds (the fifth town in Great Britain), it is my privilege, as well as my duty, to provide what are called "Free Corporation Concerts" for the inhabitants on Saturday evenings and on Tuesday afternoons.

In accordance with the direction of the town council, these concerts, as a rule, are devoted to music played on the grand organ in our magnificent Victoria Hall, and are ordinarily called organ recitals; but it is also the wish of the corporate committee that vocal and other music should occasionally be introduced, to gratify the tastes of those persons who do not seem to appreciate high-class instrumental music alone.

In December, 1885, one of these concerts, with varied vocal, organ, and pianoforte music, was given; and amongst other pieces inserted in the programme was a solo for the pianoforte, entitled *Polka de Concert*, by Vincent Wallace, composer of *Mari-tana*, etc., to be played by a pupil of mine, Miss Hinchcliffe. One Harry Wall, who has often been

"scotched but not kilt," nearly twelve months afterwards claimed two pounds damages, for the use of this piece, from the lady, from the town clerk of Leeds (for the corporation), and from myself. Having been some years ago called upon unjustly by the same individual, I resisted this fellow's application, which was cunningly and quickly transferred to a man named Adams (Wall's brother-in-law).

Not being in the hall at the time the piece was supposed to have been played, it was some time after Wall's application that I found, to my amazement, that the lady had substituted another piece; so that no legal demand could be made upon me. However, Wall & Co. proceeded to issue a writ; and, by some inexplicable error between my solicitor at Leeds and his London agent, who had the conduct of the defence, the plaintiff, as my solicitor put it, "snapped judgment."

To the surprise and horror of myself and family, three strange men appeared at my house on Christmas Eve, amid an assembly of relatives and friends, one of the men announcing himself as the sheriff's officer, and claiming £17 12s. 10d. at the suit of one Adams, referring, of course, to the copyright question.

On my refusing to pay, he informed me that he

had the bailiffs with him, who had full authority to distrain immediately on my goods and chattels to that amount. This indeed placed me in a sorry plight; for I was due in an hour at the Town Hall to give a special Christmas organ recital; and it was out of the question to leave such creatures in my house, where the family and guests, having been apprised of the circumstances, and never having witnessed the like before, became alarmed and annoyed beyond description. My only way out of the difficulty was the usual one—TO PAY. I therefore gave a cheque for the amount claimed, under protest; but, alas! my troubles by no means ended here, for the sheriff's agent must return to Leeds (I live two miles out), taking with him my cheque, and *one* man—but leaving the other man "in possession," and *such* a man! Would that I had the pencil of a Hogarth or a Cruikshank, that I could give you a delineation of this fat, oily, thirsty creature! However, he was placed by a servant in my study, where, of course, he appropriated the most easy of easy chairs, in front of a glorious Yorkshire fire, with the yule-log burning half-way up the chimney. It seems that, without any direction of mine, he was supplied with a decanter of whisky, cigars, etc., and proceeded to avail himself of the privilege, which he afterwards declared he was

proud to possess, hiccoughing out, when half-way through the whisky, "I—hic—likesh to—hic—come to—hic—Dr. Shpark's; nicshe place—hic—want to co-co-come again."

When, two or three hours afterwards, the officers arrived with the necessary release of the "bum," they in their turn encountered a difficulty and annoyance, for their subordinate was so entirely obfuscated that he declined to be shifted from his comfortable quarters; and it was some time before he could be removed, which he ultimately was, and rolled into a cab.

On my return home, I need scarcely add that my work was set in endeavouring to reinstate my wife, family, and friends to their normal condition of comfort, peace, and Christmas anticipation.

On Boxing Day I gave the usual special organ recital, which was attended by crowds of music-loving people; and, on my descending the stairs leading from the organ to my private room, I found my way suddenly blocked by a stout, determined-looking individual, who, to my horror, I recognised as the inestimable "bum" who had partaken so freely of my enforced hospitality on the Friday previous.

"What!" I exclaimed, nay, almost shrieked, "*you* here! What do you want *now*? Let me pass. Do

you want to take me to gaol, or to some other horrible place?"

"I want to see you privately," he sternly said.

"You shan't," I said. "I'll pass, if I die for it. Let me go to my room; get out of my way!"

At that moment some friends came forward, and, hearing from me the painful position in which I was placed, seized the man and carried him bodily into my room.

"Ask him what he wants with me now," I gasped; "and for heaven's sake let me have a little quiet and rest, for I am tired with the excitement and worry of the last few days over that confounded Harry Wall case."

It transpired that the man had, with the best intentions in the world, and no doubt some prospect of further "backsheesh," come to tender an apology in his way for having imbibed so much and made himself such a nuisance in my house on Christmas Eve; but before he could finish, he was bundled, neck-and-crop, most ignominiously into the corridor, and I hope that is the last I shall ever see of such myrmidons of the law.

After this, my solicitor, feeling that I had been the victim of unwarrantable proceedings on the part of Harry Wall, Adams & Co., proceeded with the action, and ultimately obtained judgment against

Adams for the full amount of all costs; but, on their proceeding to *his* establishment, the sheriff's officer was informed that Adams was a pauper, and hadn't a "bawbee" to pay with; and so I was called upon to find the whole of the costs, amounting to £52 12s. 1d. Having been assured, and believing, that I was acting as an officer of the corporation, and solely on their behalf, I applied to the committee to reimburse my losses.

Sir George Morrison, the town clerk (who privately was most kind and courteous in the matter), was instructed to send me a copy of the following resolution :

"That Dr. Spark be informed, in reply to his letter now read, that, whilst the committee sympathise with him in the unfortunate position in which he is placed, they regret that, inasmuch as the 226th clause of the Municipal Corporation's Act, 1882, does not apply to the case, they are unable to pay the costs and expenses incurred by him in defending the action of '*Adams v. Spark*.'"

This being the case, there was no alternative but to settle my solicitor's bill, which I did with as good a grace as I could possibly command; and I was left to reflect (and have reflected ever since) how cruelly a person may be harassed and injured by a litigious man who has no means whereon an execu-

tion may be levied; and I can only conclude this true Christmas story with a wish that none of my professional brethren (or any other men) may ever be placed in a similar painful position.

* * * * *

DR. S——D, a well-known medical practitioner in Leeds when I was a boy, who had a great *penchant* for violins and violin music, was a member of a so-called quartet society, which I used to attend as a pianoforte accompanist. The members consisted of about seven or eight music-loving people; and our *répertoire* was generally confined to comparatively easy arrangements of symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, etc., for pianoforte, violins, 'cello, double bass, and flute. Very much delighted we all were with our performances, notwithstanding that the violoncello player once informed us, after a wretched attempt to play a movement in four flats, that "he was afraid he had not added much to the excellence of the harmony, inasmuch as there were four flats marked at the commencement of the piece, and he would tell the truth and shame the devil by admitting that he had never been able to go beyond two flats, and did not know what the others were!"

It was on that night that a well-known solicitor of Leeds, Mr. J. M. B——, a non-performing mem-

ber, re-christened our meetings "The Quart Jug Society," for what reason I am unable to tell. After the escapade of the 'cello player, our first violin, who was truly a musical enthusiast, not having heard what had been said as to the omission of the two flats, exclaimed when the piece was finished, "Is it not positively lovely? Oh! I am so fond of music"; and he wiped his violin and resined his bow, and asked that the same piece might be played again. Of course I naturally resisted any attempt at further ear-splitting; and I took the doctor on one side, and explained, to his intense surprise and astonishment, the circumstance; and yet he afterwards blandly added, "I thought the piece went very sweetly." The most delightful instance however of the worthy amateur violinist's absence of mind, when scraping away at his valuable Cremona, occurred in the old Music Hall, when Dr. Wesley was rehearsing for a performance of Haydn's *Creation*. By some unfortunate means or other, Dr. S——d had got altogether wrong in playing his part as second violin, and Wesley tapped the desk and called out to him, "Dr. S——d, you're wrong; you're wrong! Pray stop at once: pray stop!" But our hero was so much absorbed in the delight which his own playing produced, that he went on furiously fiddling away, regardless of the admonition and

the consequences; and he was left playing alone when the rest of the band had finished. He took out his pocket-handkerchief, wiped his fevered brow and the tears from his eyes, and, going up to the conductor, said, with emotion, "O doctor, isn't Haydn's music divine? It always affects me to tears, especially that lovely trio and chorus, 'The Lord is Great.' *Couldn't* we have it over again?" Wesley's reply I cannot give, but it was neither courteous nor obliging; the medical doctor was fortunately shortly afterwards called out to a case, which I trust he understood much better than taking a part in Haydn's *Creation*.

* * * * *

I WAS staying with a country squire in Lancashire from Saturday till Monday, when the hostess, who was charming both in person and manner, possessed of one of those persuasive tongues which become irresistible when preferring a request from "us poor men," asked if I would play their little organ at the village church service in the morning. I need hardly say that I at once consented to do so.

"You must not expect much in the way of singing," she said. "Indeed, in consequence of a break up in the choir a short time since, we've not been able for some time to sing the *Venite exultemus*,

However," she added, "I will send for the clerk, and that important personage, the blower; and no doubt you will soon arrange with them what you propose to do extra on this occasion."

After arranging with the clerk as to the chants and hymns, and agreeing to have the *Venite*, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord," I addressed myself to the organ-blower:

"Now, Tomkins," I said, "remember that when the minister says, 'Praise ye the Lord!' and the choir and people respond, 'The Lord's name be praised!' you be sure and put in the wind."

"Yes," he replied, with a very bad stammer; "I'll be sure to do as you wish. I know all about it; I'll blow at the right place."

Sunday morning arrived, and the service proceeded as far as I have stated, when of course my hands were immediately placed on the keys to commence the *Venite*; but not a sound could I extract from that "kist o' whistles," and so the vicar had to proceed to read the psalms, instead of the choir singing it, as arranged. On going to the back of the organ and remonstrating with the "master of the handle," and asking why he did not blow at the time appointed, he replied, with a considerable amount of stuttering:—

"If you p-p-please, sir-r-r-r, I was a-a-a-waiting for you to be-be-be-begin!"

* * * * *

IT has often been noticed that half-demented, silly men have made the best organ-blowers; but, as this office is now almost extinct, I very much fear that the why and wherefore will never be explained to an inquiring and inquisitive world. Let the psychologists and other scientists settle the momentous question as best they can.

A few years ago, when I "opened" many organs in the East Riding,—at Hull, Beverley, Driffild, and other towns,—there was a middle-aged man who went by the name of "Silly Sam"; and he would often walk fifteen or twenty miles if he heard I was going to play the organ, and would suddenly appear at a trial of the instrument before the performance, grin, and shout out: "You see I'm here, doctor. It'll be all reight now I sall blow."

After a performance on a beautiful new instrument, built by the eminent firm of Foster & Andrews, Silly Sam waylaid me; showed me his favour, which was more like a cauliflower than any ordinary garden bloom, in his best Sunday coat, and begged, in his own funny way, that I would give him a testimonial. I told him to call at the house where

I was staying the next morning, and he should have one. The exact wording thereof I cannot now remember, but I know I testified in glowing language as to the steadiness of Sam's wind, his unerring regularity in making his stroke, and his never-failing readiness to have his wind ready on all 'occasions when required. He was so delighted with this testimonial, that he spent all the money he could collect in having it placed in a handsome frame, and hanging it prominently over the mantelpiece in the little room of his mother's "cottage near a wood." Thither would Sam take all his companions, and every one he could induce to go, to show them this testimonial to his powers as an organ-blower. "See," he would say, "what he says; and I can tell *you* that he never plays half as well without me as when I am there; but eh, my word, doesn't t' doctor tak it out of me when he's gotton all t' stoppers out!"

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MR. BISHOP, the famous London organ-builder, once told me a story respecting the opening of a new organ by the elder Wesley,—“Old Sam,” as he was always called,—which was certainly characteristic of that distinguished musician, and perfectly unique of its kind. Wesley, as all the musical world is aware, was a great extemporaneous fugue

player ; and on the occasion I allude to was requested to show off the new organ, by playing a voluntary at the afternoon service, previously to the reading of the first lesson. Before going to the instrument, he asked the vicar (who was an amateur organist) how long the voluntary should last.

"Oh," replied the vicar, "please yourself, Mr. Wesley. Say five or ten minutes; but we should like to hear as much of the different stops as you can oblige us with."

When the time came, and after a few preliminary chords, Wesley started a fugal subject, which he worked out in a masterly way in about a quarter of an hour; and the vicar was immediately going to commence reading the lesson, when the inexhaustible organist started a second subject, and this he developed in the same abstruse, elaborate manner as the first. The congregation, as well as the clergyman, having now listened half an hour to the full organ in fugue playing; and the vicar believing that Mr. Wesley would work both subjects together, and thus go on for perhaps another quarter of an hour, he beckoned Mr. Bishop, the builder, to come up to the reading desk, and said in an agitated tone :

"What ever must we do, Mr. Bishop, to stop Mr. Wesley? He is in one of his extemporaneous flights, and the congregation are beginning to leave."

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"Oh!" replied the organ-builder, "I can soon stop him, if you give me authority, and will take the consequences."

"By all means," said the distressed vicar, "stop it at any cost; or all the congregation will leave us, and we shall get no collection."

Mr. Bishop went to the organ-blower's place, which was situated a little below the organ floor, and, holding up half a crown, he said hurriedly:

"Come and take this; I am just going."

The blower pumped the bellows full, and made for the half-crown, Bishop detaining him until the wind went out with a suck and a grunt, leaving poor Wesley high and dry in the middle of his double fugue, which I am afraid is unfinished to this day.

* * * * *

WHEN Dr. Wesley was first appointed organist at Exeter Cathedral, the blowing function of the cathedral organ was accomplished by a dear old man called Glen, who received what was then considered the capital salary of twenty pounds a year; and for this sum he was to be at the beck and command of the dean, chapter, organist, and sub-organist, on all and every occasion. Though then only twelve years of age, I was always anxious to listen to Wesley's practising, and would creep up to the organ-blower's

place, and help poor Glen as much as my strength would permit.

As Wesley played the pedals much more than his predecessors, and was also much fuller in his harmonical combinations, the old blower felt that he would soon be unable to discharge the extra amount of work imposed upon him; and one evening, when Samuel Sebastian had been laying it on rather stronger than usual, the old man let out the wind, and, turning to me with tears in his eyes, said :

“O Master William, I can’t abide him; he’ll be the death of me if he goes on like this long.”

And so it proved; for three weeks afterwards poor old Glen, the organ-blower, was carried to his last home, and died, if not of a broken heart, at least of insufficient wind.

* * * * *

SPEAKING of Exeter Cathedral, the services and choir arrangements and the conduct of the singing men and singing boys were very different when I first entered the choir from what they were afterwards, and are of course at the present time. For some years, on Guy Fawkes’ day, November 5th, which was always celebrated in old *Semper Fidelis* with amateur pyrotechnic displays and huge bonfires, illuminating the quaint and revered cathedral,

the anthem invariably sung was Croft's, "We will rejoice in the name of the Lord," in one part of which the word "remember" is several times repeated.

On one occasion old Potter, the senior lay vicar at the time (he was over seventy years of age), who sang a weak bass, and was immediately behind me, leaned forward at this passage, "Remember," and said :

"You know, boys, what word rhymes with November, and what day it is."

Of course a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse (or horses), and I am sorry to say that the boys, myself included, sang :

" But we will remember !
The fifth of November !
Remember November," etc.

This piece of vandalism was not discovered by either clergy or congregation (very small in those days); and as soon as we doffed our surplices, and trundled out, we repeated the strain in the cloisters, accompanied by squibs, crackers, cannon, etc., with the keen enjoyment that belongs to all boys at that age.

* * * * *

TOUCHING this same old Potter, my father used

to tell a story of his being taken by the younger lay vicars to Exmouth, about ten miles from Exeter, where the old gentleman (Potter) declared that, although he had lived so near, he had never seen the sea before. A breeze having sprung up, the captain of a fishing-smack induced the party to have a sail, Potter included. They had not gone far before they were all sick and ill at ease, the wind increasing in strength, and the waves rolling higher and higher. Potter was informed that they were caught in a dreadful storm, and he, in sheer fright, fell on his knees, and offered up a new version of the prayer, "Most gracious God, we now pray for the High Court of Parliament assembled on this occasion," etc., which, on his again reaching *terra firma*, he assured his companions was the only prayer he could remember at the moment.

* * * * *

I WAS engaged to give a lecture, some years ago, at a Mechanics' Institution not one hundred miles from Batley, on "The History and Progress of the Pianoforte." After I had concluded my labours, I went to a small inn, by appointment, to meet a Yorkshire local composer, whom we will call Mr. Dorritt, with whom I had been in correspondence respecting an examination and opinion of some an-

thems of his writing. He had engaged a little room behind the bar, where we could have quiet and solitude. I told Dorritt that I could not spare more than half an hour, as I was going to sup with some neighbouring gentry at eleven o'clock, it then being after ten, p.m. Dorritt produced his first anthem, and after examination I observed, "Well, Thomas" (I had known him for some time, and used his Christian name, which is quite fashionable in these parts), "this is a very fair composition, but it is full of errors," which I pointed out to him, and corrected a few; when he exclaimed, in broad Yorkshire:

"You're reight, doctor; tha tells me true. I loikes thee, doctor; give us thee hand."

He then produced his second anthem, in which, when I had examined it, I pointed out both the excellences and the defects. Dorritt became more excited, and exclaimed, "I loikes thee, Spark; tha tells me t' truth."

A third anthem was produced, and, on praising its construction more than the others, its composer became still more animated, and exclaimed, "I loikes tha, William Spark; tha tells me t' truth."

I was now anxious to go, but Dorritt said:

"No, Spark, don't go. Look at this anthem; it's better than t' others, and has some reight good stuff in it."

I could not resist this appeal, and looked over the anthem, which was undoubtedly the best. I pointed some errors out, and played portions of it on a very old-fashioned piano that happened to be in the room, when Dorritt went into ecstasies, and grasping both hands, he said :

"I loikes tha, Billy; tha tells me t' truth!"

* * * * *

A TENOR from the Yorkshire hills, with a strong constitution and a robust voice, once came to me for a testimonial, to enable him, as he said, to get "a job at a cathedral," which he had seen advertised in one of the local papers, and which turned out to be no less an appointment than that of principal tenor in the choir of York Minster, during the reign of Dr. Monk. On examination, I found that he possessed a splendid voice, of good quality, great compass, and equality of tone.

"Now," I said, "let me hear what you can sing."

He replied, "Well, I can sing 'Comfert ye,' and 'Coom if you dar.'"

I am afraid my London brethren would have scarcely known what the aspiring tenor meant; but, being almost "native and to the manner born," I rightly interpreted his remarks to mean, "Comfort

ye, My people," from the *Messiah*, and "Come if you dare," from *King Arthur*, by Purcell.

The candidate for a "job at t' cathedral" then commenced singing "Comfort ye," which he did by pronouncing the o like ooo, then em, and fuert ye, and so on to the end of the recitative, with a fearfully bad pronunciation, of the broadest Yorkshire I have almost ever heard. But his culminating achievement was in "Come if you dare," which he pronounced something in this way :

"Coom ef yee darr. aar trummpits soond !

Coom ef yee darr, aar foes reboond !

We coom, we coom, we coom, we coom,

Says the dubble, dubble be-at of the thoondrin droom."

After this I promised to write to Dr. Monk, and give a true account of his singing and pronunciation; and, paying his examination fee, the quasi-tenor went on his way rejoicing; but whether he got the appointment or not I never heard.

* * * * *

NOT long after the Leeds Town Hall organ was built, I made a point of going two or three mornings a week, from seven to eight o'clock, when all was quiet, to rehearse my pieces for coming recitals; the doors were all locked; and the organ-tuner generally

returned at a quarter-past eight to turn off the water and close the instrument.

On one of these occasions, after a stormy November night, the wind being still loud, furious, and whistling through the windows and corridors, mingling strangely with the sweeter tones coming from the noble organ, I was suddenly startled by a thundering noise in the Hall, which, on turning round, I found came from a stalwart, bald-headed, middle-aged gentleman, who was flourishing a big stick, which he repeatedly brought down with terrific force on the bare wooden seats. He shouted to me in stentorian tones, "Now, sir, you stop playing that stuff" (it was one of Bach's finest fugues), "and give me Boyce in A, Jackson in F, or Mornington in E. If you don't, I'll tell your mother, and come up and break every bone in your body!" This was pleasant, seeing that I had been left alone in the Hall, and that my attendant would not probably return for at least a quarter of an hour.

There could be no doubt in my mind that the poor fellow was an escaped lunatic; and it afterwards turned out to be the fact, and that he had managed to obtain access to the Hall through the balcony door, which must have been left open, and had slid down into the body of the Hall by the side of the huge pillars. As an old cathedral boy, I remem-

bered the strains of the services he mentioned ; and, whilst I played portions of Boyce in A and Jackson in F, he began singing, keeping good time with his stick. Naturally, I became terrified as he made a move to come up to the organ ; and I took a bolt to get inside the instrument, where I knew I could safely hide behind some of the larger pipes. Fortunately, just as I was entering the organ, the tuner unlocked the door, and I immediately got outside, locked the madman in, and rushed down to the police office, where we found one of the keepers from the York Asylum anxiously seeking the lunatic, whom we were still more anxious to get rid of. It was astonishing to observe the moment the madman saw the keeper, with what docility he walked up to him, shook him by the hand, and told him in strange terms and language of the beautiful music he had heard in the Leeds Town Hall that morning. After such an exploit as this, I took steps to always have a friend or pupil with me during my private rehearsals on the organ.

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